This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

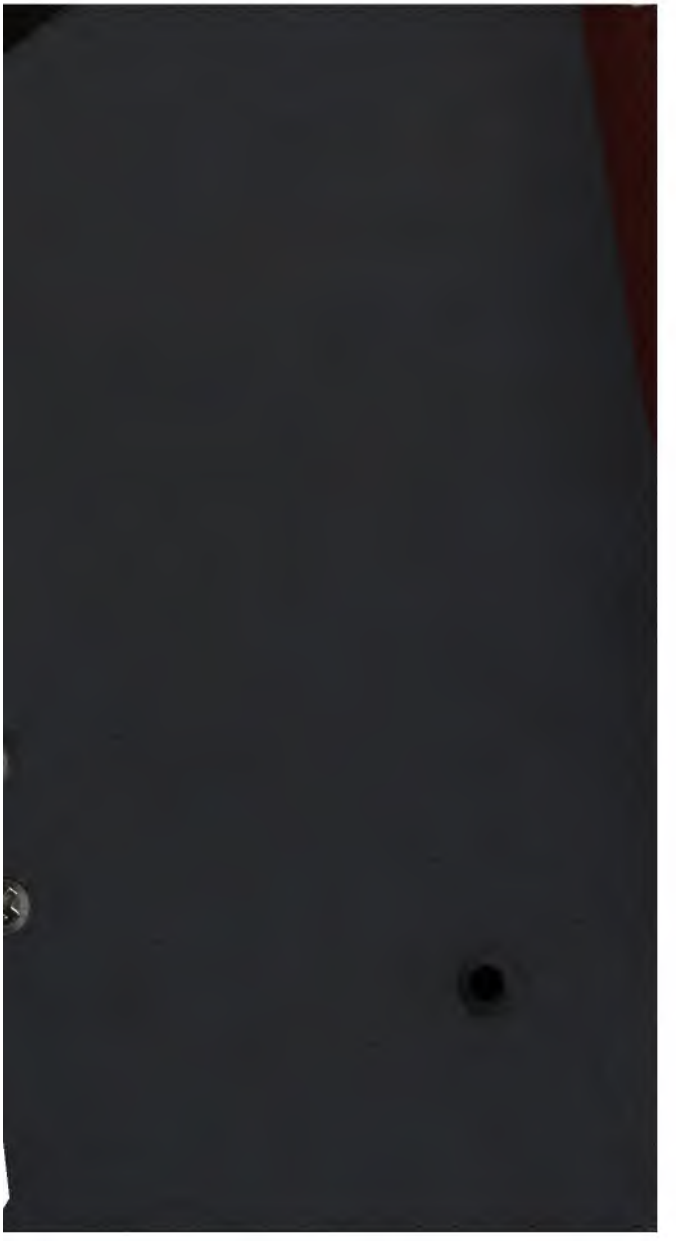
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

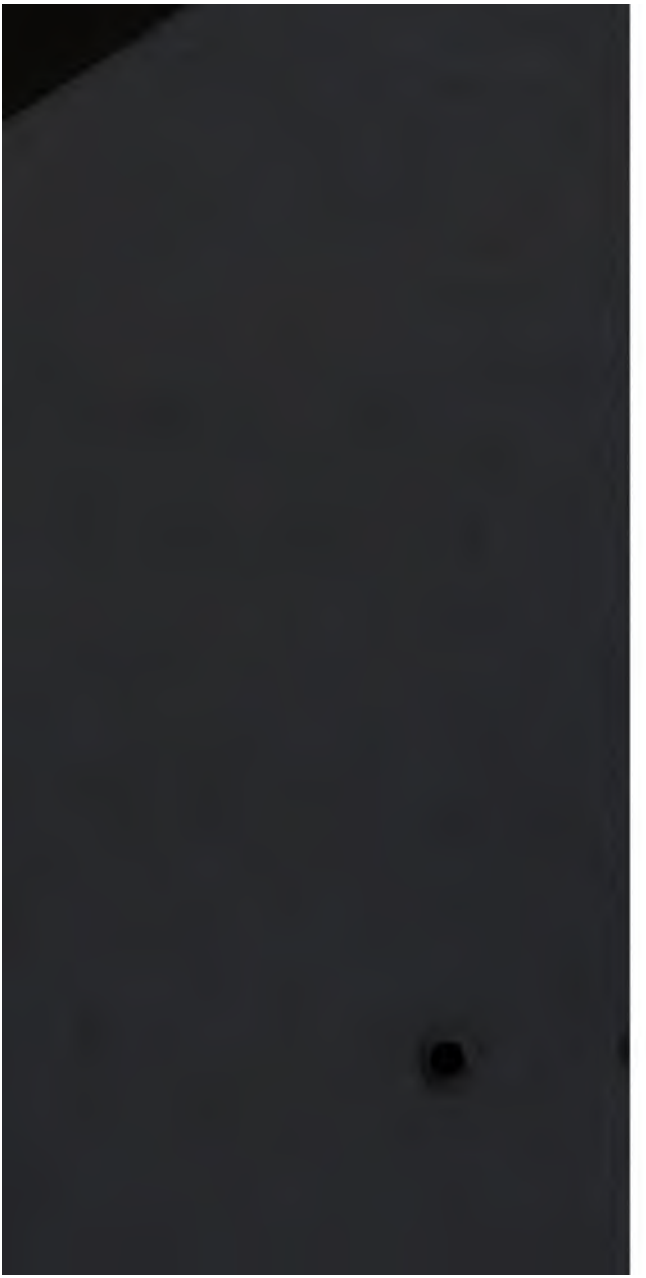
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`





A

SERIES

OF

LECTURE SERMONS,

DELIVERED AT THE

SECOND UNIVERSALIST MEETING,

IN BOSTON.

BY HOSEA BALLOU, PASTOR.

THIRD ED. STEREOTYPED.
REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."—*Jesus Christ.*
"Let us go on to perfection."—*St. Paul.*

UTICA, N. Y.
ORREN HUTCHINSON.

1840.

BX
9943
.B3
S4
1840

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1832, by
MARSH, CAPEN & LYON,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

1430
19-3

A

SERIES

OF

LECTURE SERMONS,

DELIVERED AT THE

SECOND UNIVERSALIST MEETING,

IN BOSTON.

BY HOSEA BALLOU, PASTOR.

THIRD ED. STEREOTYPED.
REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."—*Jesus Christ.*
"Let us go on to perfection."—*St. Paul.*

UTICA, N. Y.
ORREN HUTCHINSON.
1840.

LECTURE VII.

The burning up of the proud and of all that do wickedly.

Malachi, iv. 1.—"For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." 89

LECTURE VIII.

The story of Joseph, an illustration of Christ's kingdom.

Deuteronomy, xxxiii, 16, 17.—"Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." 103

LECTURE IX.

The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Matthew, xii. 31, 32.—"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." 117

LECTURE X.

The Scripture doctrine of election.

Romans, xi. 7.—What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 132

LECTURE XI.

God reconciling the world unto himself through Christ.

2d. Corinthians, v. 18, 19, 20.—And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 145

LECTURE XII.

All men drawn to Christ.

John, xii. 32.—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will *draw all men* unto me." 160

LECTURE XIII.

Christ sowing the good seed, in tears.

Psalm, cxxvi. 6.—"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." 173

LECTURE XIV.

Entering into life maimed; and being cast into hell.

Mark, ix. 43, 44.—"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched;—Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." . . 188

LECTURE XV.

All men the children of God. Destruction of the devil.

Hebrews, ii. 14, 15.—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;—And deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." . 202

LECTURE XVI.

The second death

Revelation, xxi. 8.—"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." 216

LECTURE XVII.

Salvation, a deliverance from error and sin, through the mercy of God.

2 Timothy, i. 9, 10.—"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began:—But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." . . 231

LECTURE XVIII.

Explanation of Matthew xxiv. and xxv.

Matthew, xxv. 46.—"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." . . 246

LECTURE XIX.

Righteousness and wickedness recompensed on earth.

Proverbs, xi. 31.—"Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." . 262

LECTURE XX.

Divine goodness in the destruction of the Sodomites and other sinners.

Ezekiel, xvi. last of 50.—"Therefore I took them away as I saw good." 276

LECTURE XXI.

Vexation of false religion.

Isaiah, xxviii. last of 19.—"And it shall be a vexation only to understand the report." 291

LECTURE XXII.

God's unchangeable love to sinners the cause of Christ's mission.

Romans, v. 8.—"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." . 306

LECTURE XXIII.

The resurrection a state of holiness and bliss.

1. Thessalonians, iv. 13.—"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." . . 320

LECTURE XXIV.

"The resurrection of life;" and "the resurrection of damnation.

John, v. 28, 29.—"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." 334

LECTURE XXV.

All God's judgments issue in love.

Zephaniah, iii. part 17.—"He will rest in his love." . 348

LECTURE XXVI.

The healing efficacy of Christ's doctrine.

Mark, v. 31.—"Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, who touched me?" 362

LECTURE XIII.

Christ sowing the good seed, in tears.

Psalm, cxxvi. 6.—"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." 173

LECTURE XIV.

Entering into life maimed; and being cast into hell.

Mark, ix. 43, 44.—"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched;—Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." . . 188

LECTURE XV.

All men the children of God. Destruction of the devil.

Hebrews, ii. 14, 15.—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;—And deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." . 202

LECTURE XVI.

The second death

Revelation, xxi. 8.—"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." 216

LECTURE XVII.

Salvation, a deliverance from error and sin, through the mercy of God.

2 Timothy, i. 9, 10.—"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began:—But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." . . 231

LECTURE XVIII.

Explanation of Matthew xxiv. and xxv.

Matthew, xxv. 46.—"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." . . 246

LECTURE XIX.

Righteousness and wickedness recompensed on earth.

Proverbs, xi. 31.—"Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." . 262

would have despised the least intimation of the salvation of sinners. He would, no doubt, have looked on such intimation, as an heresy of a most dangerous tendency. But the case with the great Apostle of the Gentiles was very different. He had been led to see that not as a righteous man, but as the chief of sinners he had been visited with the abundance of that grace by which he was so highly distinguished. He therefore looked on himself as sufficient proof of the testimony which he bore. Such as the following were, no doubt, the reflections of his mind; I know for certainty, that I was a most deadly enemy of this lovely Jesus whom I now delight to serve; I know, that in my opposition to this religion, I was exceedingly mad, and I caused many of the harmless, inoffensive disciples of Christ, both men and women, to feel the weight of my displeasure. Such was my blind zeal, such the enmity that rankled in my heart against him and his doctrine, who was a friend to sinners, that "I thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus;" and I persecuted the saints "unto the death." But, O wonderful to behold! I am now a most joyful subject of that grace to which I was such an enemy. From such reflections might very justly be drawn this conclusion; "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

This testimony, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners is sufficiently corroborated by other scriptures. When those, in the days of Jesus, who thought they were righteous and despised others, found fault with the Saviour, because he was a friend to sinners, he plainly told them, that he "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" he furthermore represented the same divine truth in that remarkably instructive saying; "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Moreover, he enlarged on this subject in several beautiful parables, the design of which was to represent the repentance of sinners. The blessed Redeemer testified that "God *sent not his son* into the world, to condemn the world,

but that the world through him might be saved." The declaration of the Angel to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins," is in direct proof of what is testified in our text.

There are two good reasons why Jesus was not sent to call the righteous. First. There were none. "When God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." After the Apostle had described, in his epistle to the Romans, the abominable character of the wicked, he adds; "What then, are we better than they? no, in no wise: for we have before proved both? Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Again to the same point; "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Secondly. If there had been any righteous, they would not have needed Jesus to call them to repentance. It is as improper for a righteous man to repent, as it is for a well man to take medicine. If the man in health should take medicine, it would be likely to render him indisposed; and if a righteous man should repent, he would render himself wicked.

If it be allowed, as has been proved, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and that the gospel seeks, as subjects of its grace, sinners only, then it should never be argued, that there are some who cannot be saved because they are sinners.—This contains the absurdity, that, that which renders salvation necessary is an objection to it. If we may further notice the observation of the Saviour it is pertinent to remark on the impropriety of saying, that because the patient is sick, therefore the physcian will administer or prescribe nothing. Nor would the extremity of a case render the objection in the least plausible, unless the malady was of such a nature as to bid defiance to the power of medicine; but *on the contrary, the* more indisposed the patient

A

SERIES

OF

LECTURE SERMONS,

DELIVERED AT THE

SECOND UNIVERSALIST MEETING,

IN BOSTON.

BY HOSEA BALLOU, PASTOR.

THIRD ED. STEREOTYPED.
REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."—*Jesus Christ.*
"Let us go on to perfection."—*St. Paul.*

UTICA, N. Y.
ORREN HUTCHINSON.
1840.

BX
9943
.B3
S4
1840

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1832, by
MARSH, CAPEN & LYON,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

1A30
19-3

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

The Objects of Salvation: and its nature.

1 Timothy, 1. 15.—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 7

LECTURE II.

The Divine Character the source of all the grace manifested in the gospel: And the standard for our imitation.

Matthew, v. 48.—"Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." 20

LECTURE III.

The Law, consistent with the Promises.

Galatians, iii. 21.—"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid." 35

LECTURE IV.

Love, the centre of all the Divine attributes.

1 John, iv. 16.—"God is love." 47

LECTURE V.

Man originally made subject to vanity and to hope.

Romans, viii. 20.—"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." 61

LECTURE VI.

Salvation impartial and universal.

Isaiah, xxv. 6, 7, 8.—"And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from *off all the earth*: for the Lord hath spoken it." 75

LECTURE VII.

The burning up of the proud and of all that do wickedly.

Malachi, iv. 1.—"For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." 89

LECTURE VIII.

The story of Joseph, an illustration of Christ's kingdom.

Deuteronomy, xxxiii, 16, 17.—"Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." 103

LECTURE IX.

The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Matthew, xii. 31, 32.—"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." 117

LECTURE X.

The Scripture doctrine of election.

Romans, xi. 7.—What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 132

LECTURE XI.

God reconciling the world unto himself through Christ.

2d. Corinthians, v. 18, 19, 20.—And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 145

LECTURE XII.

All men drawn to Christ.

John, xii. 32.—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." 160

LECTURE XIII.

Christ sowing the good seed, in tears.

Psalm, cxxvi. 6.—"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." 173

LECTURE XIV.

Entering into life maimed; and being cast into hell.

Mark, ix. 43, 44.—"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched;—Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." . . 188

LECTURE XV.

All men the children of God. Destruction of the devil.

Hebrews, ii. 14, 15.—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;—And deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." . 202

LECTURE XVI.

The second death

Revelation, xxi. 8.—"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." 216

LECTURE XVII.

Salvation, a deliverance from error and sin, through the mercy of God.

2 Timothy, i. 9, 10.—"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began:—But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." . . 231

LECTURE XVIII.

Explanation of Matthew xxiv. and xxv.

Matthew, xxv. 46.—"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." . . 246

LECTURE XIX.

Righteousness and wickedness recompensed on earth.

Proverbs, xi. 31.—"Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." . 262

LECTURE XX.

Divine goodness in the destruction of the Sodomites and other sinners.

Ezekiel, xvi. last of 50.—"Therefore I took them away as I saw good." 276

LECTURE XXI.

Vexation of false religion.

Isaiah, xxviii. last of 19.—"And it shall be a vexation only to understand the report." 291

LECTURE XXII.

God's unchangeable love to sinners the cause of Christ's mission.

Romans, v. 8.—"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." . 306

LECTURE XXIII.

The resurrection a state of holiness and bliss.

1. Thessalonians, iv. 13.—"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." . . 320

LECTURE XXIV.

"The resurrection of life;" and "the resurrection of damnation.

John, v. 28, 29.—"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." 334

LECTURE XXV.

All God's judgments issue in love.

Zephaniah, iii. part 17.—"He will rest in his love." . 348

LECTURE XXVI.

The healing efficacy of Christ's doctrine.

Mark, v. 31.—"Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, who touched me?" 362

David L Dorey

LECTURE I.

THE OBJECTS OF SALVATION; AND ITS NATURE.

1. TIMOTHY, i. 15.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am Chief."

THE subject on which the Apostle was speaking, and which led him to make the important declaration contained in our text, is worthy of special notice. Under a deep sense of the goodness of God, the grace which he had received in the Lord Jesus, the distinguished and important station in which he was placed by the great Captain of our salvation, it was impossible for him not to take a most humiliating retrospective view of his past life in the Jews' religion, while an enemy to Jesus, a blasphemer, and a persecuter of the church. All these weighty considerations having their natural operations on his mind, seemed to present, in full view, before his mental vision, the great and glorious errand on which the Lord Jesus was sent into our world. If it could have been so, that the Apostle, while engaged in the ministry of Jesus, could have retained his former confidence in his own righteousness, and had been of opinion, that he was a favorite of heaven, that he was enlightened into the knowledge of the gospel, and even put into the ministry because his former conduct had merited these favors, it is evident that such views could never have led him to make the *statement found in* our text. Confirmed in *such a persuasion, he would* have preached a Saviour for *the righteous, yea,* for the righteous only. He

would have despised the least intimation of the salvation of sinners. He would, no doubt, have looked on such intimation, as an heresy of a most dangerous tendency. But the case with the great Apostle of the Gentiles was very different. He had been led to see that not as a righteous man, but as the chief of sinners he had been visited with the abundance of that grace by which he was so highly distinguished. He therefore looked on himself as sufficient proof of the testimony which he bore. Such as the following were, no doubt, the reflections of his mind; I know for certainty, that I was a most deadly enemy of this lovely Jesus whom I now delight to serve; I know, that in my opposition to this religion, I was exceedingly mad, and I caused many of the harmless, inoffensive disciples of Christ, both men and women, to feel the weight of my displeasure. Such was my blind zeal, such the enmity that rankled in my heart against him and his doctrine, who was a friend to sinners, that "I thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus;" and I persecuted the saints "unto the death." But, O wonderful to behold! I am now a most joyful subject of that grace to which I was such an enemy. From such reflections might very justly be drawn this conclusion; "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

This testimony, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners is sufficiently corroborated by other scriptures. When those, in the days of Jesus, who thought they were righteous and despised others, found fault with the Saviour, because he was a friend to sinners, he plainly told them, that he "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" he furthermore represented the same divine truth in that remarkably instructive saying; "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Moreover, he enlarged on this subject in several beautiful parables, the design of which was to represent the repentance of sinners. The blessed Redeemer testified that "God *sent not his son* into the world, to condemn the world,

but that the world through him might be saved." The declaration of the Angel to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins," is in direct proof of what is testified in our text.

There are two good reasons why Jesus was not sent to call the righteous. First. There were none. "When God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." After the Apostle had described, in his epistle to the Romans, the abominable character of the wicked, he adds; "What then, are we better than they? no, in no wise: for we have before proved both? Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Again to the same point; "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Secondly. If there had been any righteous, they would not have needed Jesus to call them to repentance. It is as improper for a righteous man to repent, as it is for a well man to take medicine. If the man in health should take medicine, it would be likely to render him indisposed; and if a righteous man should repent, he would render himself wicked.

If it be allowed, as has been proved, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and that the gospel seeks, as subjects of its grace, sinners only, then it should never be argued, that there are some who cannot be saved because they are sinners.—This contains the absurdity, that, that which renders salvation necessary is an objection to it. If we may further notice the observation of the Saviour it is pertinent to remark on the impropriety of saying, that because the patient is sick, therefore the physcian will administer or prescribe nothing. Nor would the extremity of a case render the objection in the least plausible, unless the malady was of such a nature as to bid defiance to the power of medicine; but *on the contrary, the* more indisposed the patient

might be, the greater would be the urgency for relief. It is granted, that this calculation is not a little wide from that which is more common, in which it is supposed, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ may extend to the condition of those who are sinners in a certain degree, beyond which point our spiritual physicians justify themselves in saying the grace of God can never extend. However, no small encouragement is derived from the divine testimony, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." These blessed words are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Never was cold water to the thirsty soul so grateful as these words of eternal life.

The attention of the hearer is now most earnestly invited to the consideration of the following question. What did Christ Jesus come into the world to save sinners from? Your public servant has heretofore labored this question in this place; but being persuaded that the general sentiment entertained among professed christians on this question is not according to scripture, it is felt to be a duty to endeavor to throw as much light on the subject as the present opportunity will permit.

No doubt many of the audience have already made up their minds, that the question proposed with so much solicitude is very easily answered, and is too free from difficulty to render much attention to the subject necessary.

Though it is greatly to be wished that this were the case, it is presumed that a concise view of the generally received opinion, on this subject, will at once discover, that erroneous notions have been and still are entertained of it.

The general opinion, which we shall endeavor to disprove, supposes that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" from the demands of vindictive justice, which recognized the whole sinful family of *man under the* penalty of endless punishment, fre-

quently called eternal death. This opinion of the penalty required by the divine law is expressed in the Catechism as follows; "All mankind, by reason of the fall, lost communion with God, fell under his wrath and curse, was made liable to the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." From the everlasting pains of hell, the same creed teaches us to believe, that Jesus Christ was appointed to save a part, and but a part of mankind. The way by which it is supposed that the Saviour undertook to save sinners from eternal punishment, was by suffering the penalty in room of the sinner; so that justice being satisfied, pardon and everlasting salvation could be granted to the guilty without any infringement of strict justice. Dr. Watts expresses this scheme of salvation nearly as follows;

"I was a rebel doom'd to fire,
Doom'd to endure eternal pains,
He on the wings of swift desire,
Assum'd my guilt and took my chains."

Again;

He quenched his Father's flaming sword
In his own vital blood."

But it is needless to take up time to be very particular in showing what this common sentiment is, for the most of us have been learning it from the beginning of childhood.

Some of the objections to this scheme of salvation are the following; 1st. The total silence of the divine testimony respecting this supposed penalty of the divine law. In the divine threatening denounced in the garden there is nothing intimated concerning this penalty of "eternal death," or the "pains of hell forever." In the malediction on Cain for the murder of his brother, there is nothing on this hereafter eternal penalty. In all the law given by Moses, containing a minute description of most terrible curses, which in severity extend to the utmost capacity of man to suffer *in this life, there is not* a single suggestion relating

to this penalty of eternal punishment in a future state.

2. The supposition of such a penalty seems dishonorable to the divine Being, because it could not have been enacted with any design to reclaim the sinner and must, therefore, be entirely repugnant to the character of God as a Father of his creatures. A parent cannot, consistently with parental love, subject a child to any penalty for faults committed, which in room of being directed to reform, would inevitably prevent repentance and reformation forever. The word of God informs us that he "is love," and that he is "our Father in Heaven." Now if this be true, the opinion, that there ever was any vindictive wrath in God, which demanded the sinner's eternal banishment from our Father in heaven must be an egregious error, and one that very much obscures and dishonor the ever blessed Father of our spirits.

3. If mankind justly deserved this supposed penalty, on account of sins committed against the divine law, how could it possibly be just for one who was not a sinner to suffer it? To condemn the innocent and clear the guilty is strictly forbidden in the law.

4. The supposition, that this penalty did actually lie against the sinners which Jesus came to save, and that he, in the sinner's room and stead, did actually suffer this penalty, embraces the absurd suppoition that Jesus suffered eternal misery in a few days.

5. If according to the common opinion, the penalty of the law subjected men "to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever," if Jesus suffered the penalty for the elect why are the elect any more liable now in this state to the miseries of this life and to death itself, than to the pains of hell forever? Most surely, if Jesus bore the whole penalty of the law in room and stead of the sinner, then it certainly cannot be just for the sinner to bear one part of this penalty any more than another. But there are none who do not partake of the miseries of this life in some degree; and there are none who are exempt from death.

Having shown that the common opinion respecting

salvation is erroneous, having no scripture authority for its support and being contrary to all revealed justice, we may proceed to notice some direct evidence from scripture against it. But here we may be concise. In the law given by Moses, there is a continued thread of plain testimony, that as a nation the house of Israel would be punished accordingly as they should depart from the statutes and judgments which the Lord commanded them: and accordingly we are informed in the sacred pages, that God punished them from time to time as their perverse and wicked conduct deserved. So likewise are we assured, that the divine Being punished other nations for their wickedness: such as Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre, Egypt, &c. In relation to the crimes of individuals we well know that God instituted penalties according to the nature of offences, and gave special directions concerning their being duly inflicted. This is not only true in respect to the laws of Israel, but it is likewise true in respect to all nations. He that holds the sword is the minister of God. Now if all this, which is as plain as any thing in the scriptures, be granted, what room is there for the supposition that the penalty due to transgression is punishment in the future eternal world? Or what reason have we to believe that Jesus suffered in room and stead of transgressors? This same Jesus Christ of whom it is believed, that he suffered the penalty of our sins in our room, that we might not suffer it, plainly states, that he will "reward every man according to his works." It seems to be evident, from the foregoing considerations, that no such penalty of endless misery was ever connected with the divine law of heaven; and equally evident, that Jesus did not come into the world to save sinners from any such penalty. No, nor did he come into the world to save the sinner from the punishment of his sins.

We have now come to the positive of our question, and we will proceed to show from the scriptures, what "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners" from.

First, *and primarily, he* came to save sinners from

their sins. If the hearer be disposed to ask what the difference is between saving a sinner from his sins, and saving him from the punishment which his sins deserve, the following reply will show. To save a criminal from the punishment which the law holds against him would be a violation of the law, but to save him from his sin, would render him righteous. To save a disobedient child from the chastisement due for his offence, would violate the wholesome law of the parent, and would have an unfavorable effect on the disobedient when reformation is the object of the chastisement. But to save the child from disobedience is the very thing the parental law requires and is all the salvation which it needs. Thus, as has been before noticed, the Angel said to Joseph; "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

Secondly, we may notice some particulars, which, however, are all comprehended in saving the sinner from his sins. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners from a state of ignorance which they were actually in, which ignorance was and ever is the cause of sin.

Of the forerunner of Jesus it was said; "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way or peace." Jesus said to the Jews; "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples in deed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." In his prayer to the Father, Jesus says; "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." It is most plainly seen by the light of these passages, that the Saviour's grace was designed to deliver sinners from mental darkness, and to give them the true knowledge of God's divine and

gracious character. This is a salvation which the ignorance of mankind rendered necessary. St. Paul, speaking on this subject to the Collossians says; "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." The power of darkness is the deception to which ignorance subjects us, from which the true knowledge of divine things delivers the mind. God says by the prophet Jeremiah; "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember the sin, no more!" The words of St. Peter are pertinent to this subject: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." And we may add, that the mission of the Apostles, to "preach the gospel to every creature and to teach all nations," implies the necessity of bringing all men to the knowledge of the truth.

The same salvation which has already been signified by a salvation from sin and from darkness or ignorance, may be denominated a deliverance from unreconciliation to God. It is easily seen, that sin and unreconciliation to God are the same. This is the state which the sinner is in, and from this condition the gospel is designed to deliver or save him. Accordingly St. Paul says; "And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit; that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God! We see by this passage as well as by the general testimony of scripture, that God did not impute the trespasses of sinners to them, in any way to prevent the manifestation of his grace in their reconciliation to himself. This reconciliation of the *world to God is the* salvation of the world, and agrees

with the testimony of the beloved disciple who said, "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the son to be the Saviour of the world." And to the same did "a bright and a shining light" bear record, saying; "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

This condition of sinners, from which Christ Jesus came into the world to save them, is represented to be death. Jesus says; "The dead shall hear the voice of the son of God, and they that hear shall live." St. Paul says to the Ephesians; "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Again; "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Was there ever a representation more erroneous, than that which has for ages led men to believe that there was a divine wrath in God, from which Jesus came to save sinners? In the passage just recited it is declared, that on account of the great love which God had to sinners, who were dead in sin, he quickened them together with Christ.

Our Redeemer represents the salvation of sinners by seeking and saving something lost, "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Time would fail us to mention all the ways by which sacred truth has represented the nature of a sinner's salvation by Jesus Christ.

The hearer is now called on to observe, that in all the representations quoted from scripture, there is no intimation of saving sinners from any punishment to which they were exposed, nor from any condition that they were not already in.

Being in possession of what the foregoing arguments seem plainly to prove, the mind of the hearer will devote its attention now to the consideration of the question, why "Christ Jesus *came into the world* to save sinners?" If the object of the Saviour's mission was to suffer the penalty of eternal punishment, which all our Doctors agree cannot be suffered in this world, *why did he come here?* Why should he come into

a world where this supposed penalty never was designed to be executed? If Jesus undertook and did actually suffer the penalty of eternal damnation in a future world, in room and stead of sinners, surely there was no need of his coming into this mortal state to do it. But he "came into the world to save sinners." And the reason why he came into this world to save sinners, was because the sinners which he came to save were in this world. To make use of the parable of the Saviour, we may remark, that the physician goes to the place where the sick are, that he may administer what may relieve the patient from sickness. The goodly Samaritan went to the place where the bruised Jew lay naked and half dead, and there he poured into his wounds the mollifying oil and the life restoring wine. The shepherd went after the lost sheep until he found it, and from the place where it had wandered he bore it on his shoulder to the fold, rejoicing.

The common doctrine, which teaches us, that Christ Jesus came into *this world* to save us in *another world* is contrary to all the representations which are found in the scriptures. If in a future world, men are sick, then in a future world men will need a physician; and if in a future world men are lost, then in a future world they will need to be sought and found; but if the inhabitant shall say I am not sick," no physician will be wanted. If sin shall exist in a future state of existence, no doubt pardoning mercy will flow as freely there as it does here. God will be the same, Christ will be the same, and love divine will be the same. But none of our creeds teach us that man will sin in a future world, and surely if they do not they will not need to be saved from sin, for they will have none.

We are not informed in the scriptures, that Christ Jesus came into the world to procure for man a state of life and immortality; but we are informed, that he "hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This divine inheritance was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but was "made

manifest by the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death."

The attentive hearer is in the next place invited to spend a few reflections on the fulness of Christ Jesus to accomplish the work of saving sinners. Remember, "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." Permit your humble servant to ask you, if you had any important concerns in a foreign country, which required the attention of one deeply skilled in such matters, would you not send one on whom you could depend? And would you not furnish him with all the necessary powers, to settle your concerns in a just and equitable manner? You answer in the affirmative.

Then it seems, that your christian candor must lead you to allow, that ample power is given to Christ Jesus to save the chief of sinners. If God himself, who is acknowledged to be omnipotent, had power sufficient for this gracious work, he surely would not send his Son with too little. "All power in heaven and in earth is therefore committed to the Son." "In him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Jesus "made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Are sinners ignorant of God? Jesus came with the true knowledge of the Father, whom to know is life eternal. Are sinners sick with spiritual leprosy? Jesus is that physician whose very word can heal. Are sinners lost and bewildered in the wilderness of sin? Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life!" Are sinners dead in trespasses and sins, the life giving power of the gospel quickens them together with Christ. Here is a fountain opened for the cleansing of the unclean, here flow medical springs, teeming with health for all who are sick. Here grows the tree of life, whose fruit is for food, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. In a word, there is no infirmity in the sinner for which there is not a cure in Christ Jesus.

To conclude; My christian friends, is not our duty, as disciples of Jesus, made plain by the doctrine of *ur text?* "*It is* enough for the disciples to be as his

LECTURE II.

THE DIVINE CHARACTER THE SOURCE OF ALL THE GRACE MANINESTED IN THE GOSPEL; AND THE STANDARD FOR OUR IMITATION.

MATTHEW v. 48.

"Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

EVERY scheme, whether human or divine, must, in order to be rationally planned, have some principle as its foundation. This foundation must, in all respects, be sufficiently extensive and firm to support the superstructure to be raised on it.

The gospel or doctrine of Jesus Christ, being a scheme planned by infinite wisdom, is established on a principle which is in all respects, both in regard to its extent and stability, amply sufficient to support the divinely glorious edifice designed to rest upon it. These remarks are evidently analogous to the subject of our text, and correspond with the manner in which it was presented to those who listened to the gracious words of the divine teacher. In his sermon on the mount, Jesus noticed many particulars, which had formerly been taught to the people and religiously believed by them, which were not consistent with the heavenly wisdom and grace of the gospel. He therefore, endeavored to present to the people the distinction between those traditions which had long been established, and that which was harmonious with that special "grace and truth," which came by him.

The particular subject under consideration is introduced as follows: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy; But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your *Father which* is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to

rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust." What the doctrine of Jesus requires of his disciples is here plainly laid down; and the reason why love and good offices to enemies were enjoined is shown in the manifest goodness of God to the evil and good, to the just and to the unjust. The divine teacher then proceeds to illustrate the propriety and fitness of his doctrine as follows; "For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?"

Having thus evidently shown, that coming short of that love and goodness to enemies which his doctrine requires, was to stand on the same ground and to act on the same principle which characterise the most illiberal and irreligious worlding, he enjoins as expressed in our text; "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Our text, thus introduced, seems to invite the attention of the hearer to the consideration of the following proposition, as a distinct subject for investigation; (viz.) The gospel of Jesus Christ is a dispensation of grace which naturally and necessarily flows from the nature of God, and obtains its peculiar character from the love of God to sinners.

What we mean when we say, the gospel of Jesus Christ flows naturally from God is, that all the causes which produce it, or cause it to flow forth to man, are in the nature of the divine Being. He is self-moved in all he does, and of course he is self-moved in the dispensation of his grace. Even the Mediator himself, who is stiled "the Captain of our salvation," had no occasion to influence the Father of our spirits to be merciful to sinners, for it is the unchangeable nature of God to be gracious. The divine being is wrongly represented, when it is said, as it often has been, that Christ has, by his life, death and resurrection opened a way for God to be merciful to sinners because this evidently supposes, that he was not merciful to sinners before this door was opened.

The testimony of Jesus evidently corrects this error, and abolishes at once all vain imaginations which have been built upon it. Hear his words; "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It is surely a very great error to suppose that the gift which the Father's love bestowed influenced him to bestow it. Such a mistake we may presume, never was made on any other subject or in any other case. Were the unhappy children of wealthy parents, whose prodigality had reduced them to wretchedness and want, to receive from them a gift of immense value, would they be likely to conclude, that the worth of this invaluable treasure was the cause of their parent's love and pity? No; but however highly they might justly prize the favor sent, they would consider it as the evidence, not the cause of parental affection. This is evidently the sense of the Apostle who says; "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Here notice, the death ofChrist was not the cause, but the commendation of the love of God toward us, while we were yet sinners. Again; "Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." This propitiation for our sins, so far from opening a door for God to be gracious, was an effect and a manifestation of the divine favor.

These arguments are designed to illustrate the proposition, that the grace of the gospel flows naturally from God to his enemies.

It is believed that no subject in divinity is of greater moment than the one under consideration. For if it be not the nature of God to be gracious, and to love his creatures, and to do them good, even though they are enemies to him by wicked works; but if he require vindictive retaliation on his enemies; and cannot, consistently with his true character, show any favor to transgressors, without being first reconciled and influenced so to do, it is to that which produces *this reconciliation* and effects this influence, that we

are to look for mercy, and not to God. Moreover, this doctrine, could it be maintained, would overthrow the doctrine of our text. "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," by loving your enemies, by blessing them that curse you, by doing good to them that hate you, and by praying for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. If it be allowed, that our Father in heaven so imputed men's trespasses to them as to render it impossible for him to extend mercy to any until his vindictive wrath was appeased, then may we reply to the requirements of the Saviour in our text, and say; First let us have satisfactory vengeance on our enemies, then we will love them and do them good. Suppose our Redeemer had taught the people, as our professed christians believe, that he had undertaken to appease his Father's wrath toward's man, by suffering the penal tortures which vindictive justice had laid on the sinner; and that by this means he should procure the favor of God for them, would he not thereby have furnished them with a reply to his injunctions expressed in our text and context? Might they not have said, When we can obtain as ample vengeance on our enemies, as you have to suffer in order to render it proper for God to love his enemies, then we will love ours? But no such doctrine can be found in the recorded testimony of Jesus. Whatever the blessed Redeemer is to us, he is made such by the Father of our spirits. Speaking to the Corinthians of Christ Jesus, the Apostle says; "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." To the same church, speaking of the ministry of reconciliation, the same author says; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." But the error which we disprove, supposes that God did impute our trespasses to us, and that Christ reconciled

There is a passage the common use of which is against our present argument, which we will here notice. "*We have an advocate* with the Father."

The common opinion supposes Jesus Christ acts the part of an advocate, by pleading our cause before God, to incline him to show mercy. This is totally erroneous. The advocacy of Jesus is expressed thus: "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God." Thus we have an advocate with the Father who pleads with us to be reconciled to God; not with God to be reconciled to us, for "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses."

That the character which we attribute, by these arguments, to the divine Being, is really what is due to him, may be made to appear by referring to his providence. This we are specially authorised to do, by the example which the Saviour has furnished in our context, and which was evidently designed by him to inculcate what these arguments are designed to prove. He directed the attention of the people to two sensible objects, which the divine providence continually holds out to our view; the sun and the rain. "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." By these ocular proofs the divine teacher inculcated the impartial love and goodness of our Father in heaven toward all men of every description of character.

It may be necessary to notice, in this place, what an objector might be disposed to urge against this impartial goodness of the divine Being toward the evil and the good, the just and the unjust.

Objection: If God be equally as good to the evil as he is to the good, to the unjust as to the just; and if he love his enemies as well as he does his friends, then there is no difference between the reward of righteousness and unrighteousness. To this objection the candid hearer will accept the following reply.—Keeping in view the character of God, as set forth in the passage under consideration, as our Father in heaven, we say that a father may love his obedient and disobedient *children impartially*, and yet, in relation to their con-

duct, may treat them as differently as they conduct one from another. But however different the treatment may be, it must, in every case, proceed from the same principle of impartial love in the parent. To illustrate this, we may observe that the parent who is visited with sickness among his children will naturally love those who are sick as well as he does those who are in health; and yet, from this equal undiminished love, he will treat them as differently as will exactly correspond with their different degrees of health. —Now, you who are parents are called on to determine whether it be right, and consistent with your character as parents, to love your children and to do good to them when they are disobedient? If you decide in he affirmative, as you most surely will, then you justify the argument, against which the objection we have noticed was stated.

If the objector should be disposed to contend, that we extend our argument too far by endeavoring to prove that the sinner is *equally* the object of divine love as the righteous, we rejoin by referring the objector to the full extent of the evidence already adduced, and to the consideration of the following remarks.

First; If we carefully examine the conduct of the divine Being toward Adam before and after transgression, shall we find any thing to justify the belief, that Adam was not equally the object of divine favor after he sinned as he was before? Whose voice did guilty Adam hear in the cool of the day, expressive of parental solicitude, crying Adam, Adam, where art thou? It was the voice of the Lord God. In that memorable hour of retribution was there the least sign that God's love towards his offspring had suffered any diminution? Does not the promise, that the seed of the woman shold bruise the serpent's head, bear date from this eventful period? Surely this was a time of love.

Secondly; Was it when the world was righteous, or when it was "in wickedness" that God so loved it, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life?" *Was Saul less the object* of the divine favor before his

conversion than afterward? Were we less beloved by him, "who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood" before he washed us, than afterward? The hearer will easily perceive that these queries all tend to show, that no change in man can effect any change in God.—And

Thirdly; The acknowledged unchangeability of the divine Being furnishes sufficient proof, that his love to his creatures can never increase nor decrease. Entertaining a hope, that what has been offered, designed to explain our meaning respecting the dispensation of divine grace flowing naturally from God, may be acceptable to the candid hearer, we will briefly state what we mean by saying, that this dispensation of grace flows necessarily from the nature of God; and offer some argument in its support.

What we mean by this part of our general proposition is, that if we take a careful view of the nature of the divine attributes, as they are revealed in creation, providence, and grace, even as short sighted as we are, we become convinced that all the ways of God, all his works, all his mercies, and all his judgments are unalterably established in truth and righteousness which never vary. It is not consistent with the attributes of God, to suppose, that he can design to do any thing, and afterward alter his determination. Nor is it any more consistent with the divine attributes to suppose that any of the designs of God, which in different ages of the world have been revealed to man, were less ancient than the design of creation; which carries us as far back as is of use to our researches. When the Almighty was pleased to reveal himself to Abraham, and call him from his people, and promise him, the land of Canaan, and to multiply him, and to bless him, and to bless all the families of the earth in his seed, however new and unexpected this might be to this "friend of God," it could be no new thing with the God of Abraham. And so we may say of any other particular manifestation of the wisdom of God. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world," and he declares "the end from the

beginning." It is furthermore said, that he "cannot lie," and that "he cannot deny himself."

Having presented the hearer, in our imperfect manner, with this short account of the foundation of the doctrine of Jesus, the attention of the audience may, for a few moments, be devoted to the consideration of the following inferences, drawn from premises already proved.

1. As we have seen, that the grace by which man obtains salvation and eternal life, flows naturally and necessarily from the nature of God, and is known by its peculiar characteristic of love to sinners, we infer that this salvation will eventually be as extensive as the love of God, from which it proceeds. If the love of the divine Being ensures salvation to any of the sinful race of Adam, it equally favors the salvation of all men, as all are equally the objects of divine love. This inference relies on the fact, that the same cause will always produce the same effects. A parent has a number of children, all needy and dependent on him, he loves them all equally, it is granted that this love will certainly favor and support some of these dependent offspring; the conclusion is, that it will grant the same favor and support to the whole. Should the speaker, this evening, inform you, that there is a parent of great respectability in this town, who has a numerous family of sons and daughters, that he is vastly rich, has all at its command that heart can wish, that he most tenderly and affectionately loves his children, and loves them impartially, that this parent has favored your servant with a knowledge of his domestic economy and government, that he often invites him to partake of his bountiful board, and of the refreshments which his generous favor constantly provides, would you not reply that all this is very probable, and that you know of many such families in the circle of your acquaintance? But should the account proceed and state, that of this numerous family of children only a fourth part were ever indulged with the society of their parent, that the other three fourths were the most *wretched beings ever seen*, that they were as nearly

starved the whole of the time as they could be and live, that they were excluded the society of the favorites, and that their extreme misery was for the honor and glory of the merciful parent, and to enhance the unalloyed happiness of the others, could you freely give your candid assent to the probability, the consistency and propriety of this account? Would you not say, that if one part of the story be true, the other must be false? You certainly would contend, that if the parent were impartial in his love to his children, he never would make the distinction reported; you would revolt with horror at the declaration, that the extreme misery of the greatest part of the family was necessary for the honor of the parent, and to enhance the felicity of the happy few. Such doctrine as this, you would say, is totally without foundation, is a superstructure having nothing for its support, and is proof positive that the mind of the reporter is deranged or corrupted. Why then will you contradict your own candid reasoning, and contend that our Father in heaven loves his offspring impartially, even his enemies, that his divine fullness is infinitely extensive, but that by some special grace which has been made known to you, you are authorised to believe and say, that but a small part of the human family will ever be made partakers of the rich bounties of salvation in Christ, and that far the most numerous part of Adam's posterity are doomed to unspeakable tortures eternally for the glory of God and to promote the happiness of a few? It is charitably believed that your candor will lead to an impartial decision of this momentous subject, and will incline you to admit what is so fully and clearly proved by the unerring testimony of truth.

2. We infer from our general subject, that the common doctrine which teaches that our Father who is in heaven, loves those who love him, but has treasured up everlasting vengeance against his enemies, is subversive of the gospel and religion of Jesus, which he preached on the glorious foundation of the *divine love* to sinners; and equally subversive of our *duty as disciples* of Christ. The common doctrine,

against which this inference is drawn, seems to adhere to the old tradition, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy," against which our Saviour labored in the place where our text is found. "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" Those who pay no attention to religion, whose thoughts are wholly engrossed by the things of a temporal concern, who lay up their treasures upon the earth, love those who love them, do good to those who do good to them, and courteously salute their brethren. Now if God love none but such as love him, if he be kind to none but such as are friendly to him, what does he more than publicans? What reward hath he? Most surely Jesus never would have inculcated the duty of loving our enemies on the principle that God hated his. But he seemed to come directly to the understanding of the people through the medium of the rising sun and falling rain, and presented them with the real character of our heavenly Father as a perfect pattern for our imitation. Suppose some of the disciples of Jesus, on this occasion, had asked him whether he meant to be understood, that our Father in heaven did really love the evil and the good, the just and the unjust, as impartially as he granted them the light of the sun and the rain from heaven? What answer may we believe the divine teacher would have returned? Would he have said, I solemly charge you not to be deceived by these temporal things? You see that the sun makes no distinction in bestowing its influence on the nations of the earth, it bounds not its blessings by any distinctions in the characters of men, it is prodigal of its innumerable blessings on the evil and on the good; so is the rain, likewise as entirely impartial; it sheds its generous favors on all without partiality; but you are not to suppose that these are true indications of the real mind and disposition of your heavenly Father. In temporal things God is "good unto all and his tender mercies are over all his works;" but in

respect to the spiritual and eternal concerns of men he has made an infinite difference. Those who love him and keep his commandments, he really loves; but his enemies are the objects of his burning wrath, and on them will his vengeance be poured forth forever. In reply to such an answer, might not the questions which Jesus asked be returned? If ye love them that love you what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? But the divine teacher would not have been so absurdly inconsistent with himself; he would have answered the supposed question in the affirmative. We have full liberty to believe this and ample authority to support it. The contrary is the very thing that he was dissuading the people from; but the affirmative of the supposed question is what he endeavored to impress on their minds.

This inference will be found to be greatly strengthened by a careful application of our text to the subject, "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." We are here required to have the same quality of perfection as our Father in heaven has. If his perfection is qualified with hatred and unmerciful wrath towards his enemies, then our perfection must be qualified by the same temper and disposition towards our enemies. But if the perfection of our heavenly Father is rendered gloriously bright by a constant display of unchangeable love and mercy towards his enemies, then it is plainly our duty to strive to the utmost to qualify our christian profession and discipleship of Jesus, with this blessed temper and good will to those who are our enemies. Jesus said to his disciples, "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his Lord." Those, therefore, who profess to love all mankind, who pray for all men, who say they fervently desire the everlasting happiness of the whole human race, and yet contend that their divine Lord and Master loves but a few, and has determined the everlasting instruction of all the rest, are guilty of *supererogation*. So far from being contented to stop at

the bounds by which they limit the holy one, they profess to love those who are held by their creed to be the objects of the divine indignation. But here let us pause;——Are these pretensions all real? Cast aside all prejudice, and examine and answer the following question: Have professors generally, who have maintained limited views of the grace of God, and yet pretended to love all men themselves, accompanied those pretensions with that spirit and temper of love and compassion toward those who have differed from them in opinion, which seem necessary to prove the sincerity of their professions? If this should be allowed, how can we account for all the persecutions which have characterised the christian churches for ages? How shall we account for that mutual bitterness, coldness and deeply rooted prejudice visible among different denominations, and by which they have so much disturbed the peace of society and of the world? There is nothing of importance ever maintained in the religious creeds of men, that does not either tend to make them better, or worse; and that character which we attribute to the divine Being, will more or less mingle itself in our own characters. Hence we account for the endeavors of the Saviour to present our Father in heaven, in a character which he would have his disciples acquire for themselves. He knew if men entertain an opinion that the divine Being loves those who love him and hates those who hate him, they would be likely to imitate what they attribute to God. He very well knew that this was the case with the people of his day, he knew it had been the case in past ages, and he knew that like causes would produce like effects; and therefore as long as men should religiously believe that God loves some and hates others, he knew that bitterness and strife would continue. From this thick cloud of darkness, from this deadly error the doctrine of divine love to the enemies of God, is the only deliverance. It makes not the least difference whether we profess to be Christians, Jews, Pagans or Mahometans, if we believe that God is an enemy to those *who are enemies to him*, we shall be likely to

exercise the same spirit and disposition which we believe our Father in heaven possesses; and we shall justify ourselves in so doing by the divine authority. Those who have and maintain this erroneous belief, are seldom if ever at a loss to know who the friends of God are, and who are his enemies. They are persuaded that they have the true faith, that they are the friends of God, and of course God is their friend; loves them, and will do good to them; but those who subscribe not to the same particular creed, are enemies to God, are the objects of his wrath and of their most bitter enmity. Such people will effect great concern for those whom they esteem as the enemies of the true faith, and will frequently exhort them to make God their friend, to delay no time in bringing themselves to those terms and to that condition which will secure the good will of our Father who is in heaven. But the only way that this can be done, is to become conformed to the particular creed and formalities of those who stile themselves the friends of God. Why did not our blessed Redeemer in the room of teaching men that their Father in heaven loves his enemies, and that they must love their enemies in order to be like him, exhort them, as we are frequently exhorted, to make our Father in heaven our friend? Answer, because such an exhortation implies that God is no better than the publicans, who love those that love them, and is calculated to maintain all the partiality in faith and practice from which Jesus came to save the world.

To conclude; Let us, my brethren, endeavor to seek to the foundation of our religion, learn the true character of our Father in heaven, and be cautious that we never consent to any belief, which in any way involves the notion that God ever was or ever can be an enemy to any of the works of his hands. And on the immoveable rock of God's impartial love to all men, let our faith and our hope rest; but not forgetting that the benefits of this heavenly doctrine of love divine can *never* be realised until it works in us a conformity to *its* requirements, and brings us into that heavenly tem-

per and spirit by which we shall love our enemies, do good to them that hate us, and pray in faith, nothing doubting, for those who despitefully use us and persecute us. Let us open our eyes to the visible signs of the love and goodness of God, and read the instructive lectures, which are delivered by a beneficent providence every day and every hour, and by them learn that wisdom which is from above, which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

LECTURE III.

THE LAW CONSISTENT WITH THE PROMISES.

GALATIANS, iii. 21.

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid."

By the manner of the Apostle's writing in this epistle, it appears evident that christians, even as early as the time of the Apostles, were strongly inclined to the opinion, that the works of the law were necessary to give validity and efficacy to the gospel of Jesus Christ. To this agrees the account we have in the 15th of Acts, where we are informed that "certain men, which came down from Judea" to Antioch, "taught the brethren and said, except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." From such sentiments it appears the Apostle labored with great earnestness to dissuade his brethren. The chapter from which our text is chosen begins as follows; "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you; received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" A little attention to this subject will discover that by *law* and *flesh* the author means the same thing. He endeavored to explain to his christian brethren the design and utility of the law, and to show that it had neither power to give the life of faith, or *to* render the promises of the gospel covenant without effect. He stated the important question on which

his whole argument rested, and answered it in our text; "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid." Whatever is contained in the promises of God, be it ever so much or ever so good, it is not in the least subject to be rendered null or even diminished in the least degree by the law; and on the other hand the promises of God do in no wise frustrate the law, but the doctrine of the divine promises does in fact establish the law. To this effect are the words of the Apostles to the Romans; "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! yea, we establish the law." Moreover Jesus himself said; "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

Our first inquiry may be directed to ascertain what is contained in the promises of God. This subject is of the utmost importance, and if duly considered cannot fail to engage the attention of hearer, and draw the mind of each individual present to an entire devotion to the inquiry proposed. The audience will not feel, on this subject, an idle indifference scarcely to be avoided while listening to declamations, authorised only by human imaginations. Nor can any part of the congregation feel a less interest in the subject than the rest, for the promises about to be examined are expressive of the will of our Father in heaven of whose divine bounty we are all equal heirs.

It is natural for children to listen with attention and solicitude to the reading of the will of an earthly parent, even where there is but little left for the heirs, for they greatly desire to know if the same good will and impartial favor be discoverable in the last expressions and latest testimony of parental love, as had evidently marked the parent's conduct through life. But where a vast fortune is left in legacies, self interest, that ruling passion of the soul, renders attention active, and every one is wide awake; and anxious to know the contents of this final testament. How much more then shall we be desirous to acquaint ourselves with *the promises of our heavenly Father* which ex-

press what he hath laid up for us in the covenant of his grace? With what impressions of mind ought we to commence this research? Is it proper that we begin this examination with prepossessions of mind most favorable to limited and ungenerous principles, or such as better correspond with the divine goodness continually manifested in a boundless, rich, and munificent providence? If simple nature alone had been our instructor, if we had not been educated in a belief which limits the holy One, if we were left to judge of the goodness of the divine Being, respecting the moral and spiritual interests of his creatures from his impartial goodness in his temporal providence, have we the least reason to believe that we should be in possession of notions opposed to the universality of divine mercy? But unhappily for us, we have early imbibed illiberal views of God and his goodness, and under this embarrassment we stand opposed to rational views of universal goodness; hence in treating the subject proposed, arguments are needed which may tend to do away our prejudices, and to establish in our minds a doctrine which will be seen to harmonize with the wonderful works and universal goodness of God.

The promises of God of which the Apostle spake in the text are those made to Abraham, which we may learn from the following in the context; "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." These *promises* made to Abraham in Christ, the apostle calls a *covenant*, a he expresses in his next words; "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance of the the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise." By this scripture we learn that the promises made to Abraham are called a covenant which was confirmed in Christ; and that which *the promises* contain, is called an inheritance.

The promises to Abraham are recorded, Genesis xii

2, 3, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." xviii. 18. "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him." xxii. 18. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The confirmation of these promises to Isaac is recorded, Genesis xxvi. 3, 4. "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries; and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father. And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and I will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The confirmation of the same promises to Jacob we read in Chapter xxviii. 14. "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

These are the promises of God, of which mention is made in our text, and which our text says, the law is not against. It may be well now to inquire something respecting the extensiveness of these promises. What is the most natural sense of such language as this? "All the nations of the earth, all the families of the earth;" and such as St. Peter used, Acts iii. 25, "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Would any person, having the least knowledge of language, make use of such to express something concerning a very small part of mankind? The learned and pious divines who composed the Westminster Catechism did not make use of such language to express the covenant of grace in which they believed. Their words are the following; "God *having, out of his mere good* pleasure, from all eterni

ty, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of a state of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation, by a Redeemer." Will any candid person say, that this language which the Westminster divines made use of to express their covenant of grace and the language which God used to express his covenant of grace to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are of the same import? No one will pretend this. If it had been the intention of those divines to state the covenant of which St. Peter spoke in Acts iii. would they not have been likely to make use of such language as he used, and as is used in other parts of the scriptures on the same subject? There can be no doubt of this. But the fact is, their covenant of grace is not mentioned in the whole of the divine oracles. It is a most humiliating thought, that the wisdom of God should have been thus totally neglected, and the wisdom, the partial, sensual wisdom of this world set in its stead. It is a matter of most painful reflection, that while the christian church have made no provision to teach youth the gospel covenant of the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob, unwearied pains and innumerable means have been employed to instruct them, "and that right early," in this covenant of men's invention. But, by attending too much to the vain notions of men, we shall get away from our subject. We will therefore observe, that the language in which the covenant which God made with the fathers is expressed, is as extensive as any language that could have been used, unless more than the whole human family were to be comprehended: All nations of the earth, all the families of the earth, and all the kindreds of the earth, is universal; and all the partial creeds of men acknowledge it to be so by carefully and respectfully neglecting to use it.

Our next inquiry will seek to ascertain the blessing which is promised to all the nations of the earth in the covenant of God.

This question is settled by the testimony of the *Apostle in our context*; "And the scriptures forese-

seeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying; in thee shall all nations be blessed." This blessing then is justification through faith. Of this justification the Apostle speaks to the Romans in language as extensive as that in which the covenant of grace was expressed to Abraham. His words are as follows; "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Again to the Romans, the Apostle speaking of Christ, says; "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." The same author in a discourse at Antioch said; "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." The hearer is requested to notice, that according to the passages quoted, the promise to Abraham is called the gospel. This gospel was preached by God himself, and no doubt was preached truly, and as Abraham believed, and as we ought to believe at this day. We also see that the thing promised, which the Apostle calls "the inheritance," is justification through faith, the word *faith* meaning *covenant;* and moreover, that all that have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, are thus "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Should the trite objection, that this doctrine justifies men in sin, be moved in this case, we reply in the words of divine truth, which never speaks of justifying men *in* sin, but "*from*, all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses." St. Peter applies the blessing which God promised, in his covenant, to Abraham, as follows; "Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." One important object which we have in view, is to show the nature of the gospel salvation, which is salvation from sin and all its evils.

The hearer is now requested to consider the terms

or conditions of the promises, the covenant made with the fathers, which embraces the salvation of all the nations, all the families, and all the kindreds of the earth in Jesus Christ. If these promises were made on any conditions of obedience on the part of the heirs of this inheritance, then unless these conditions are fulfilled we have no right to the promises? But blessed, forever blessed be the name of the God of Abraham, this covenant rests on no conditions of man's obedience. There is not a word in the promises made to the fathers, that intimates any condition on the part of those who were to be blessed. Our heavenly Father here manifests his own unchangeable, uninfluenced, unconditional good will and gracious purpose concerning all the sons and daughters of Adam. "God, willing more abundantly, to show unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; for when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swear by himself." And the design of this oath was, "that we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us."

Corresponding with the unconditionality of the "covenant of promise," we may notice a passage or two from the prophet Isaiah and St. Paul. The evangelical prophet uses language in his 26th Chapter which corresponds in three important points with the language of the divine promises. 1st. It is universal 2d.—It contains the testimony of life; and 3d. The language is positive, not conditional. The passage reads as follows; "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." In his 9th *Chapter, speaking* of the Messiah, he says, "For unto

us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. Of the increase of his goverment and peace there shall be no end." No comments are necessary to show, that the language quoted from the prophet corresponds with that in which the "covenant of promise" is recorded.

That the salvation of the gospel is not according to the works of men, St. Paul's testimony to Timothy fully shows; "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." To Titus he says; "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." On the same subject, to the Ephesians he says; "Not of works, lest any man should boast." The passage just quoted from the the epistle to Timothy is remarkable for its clearness on our subject: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works." If this salvation and calling were not according to the works, of those who were saved, then it must be according to something else. And this something must form a principle on which God could act with perfect consistency, with holiness, justice and truth. The Apostle says; "But according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, to save men, not according to their works. To this argument the objector will reply, that it is evident according to scripture and according to reason and the fitness of things, that men should be dealt with according to their merit and demerit. The objector will contend, that this is according to the law given to Israel by Moses, and is likewise according to the law *given to the* Gentiles, written in their

heart. To all this we give our full and cordial consent, and proceed to show that this is no real objection against the salvation for which we have contended, by illustrating the fact stated in our text, that the law is not against the promises of God.

This the Apostle has done in our context, in a very able and concise manner. His argument is the following, which has been already quoted on another subject; "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."

Never was there an argument more clear and conclusive. In order that the law have might any power to control the covenant of promise it should have existed prior to, or at least simultaneous with it; and then there must have been conditions in the covenant of promise of which the law should have power to take cognizance. If the objector further contend, that the moral nature of the law did exist at the time and even before the promise was made to Abraham, we grant the fact, and say: if it were consistent with the moral nature of the law, for God to make such promises, it certainly cannot be contrary to it, for him to fulfil them. It was the same God who gave the law to man, that made the promises to the father of the faithful: and nothing can be more unreasonable than to suppose, that he either made a law against his own promises, or promises against his own law.

The true design of the law, in relation to the gospel which was preached unto Abraham, is represented by a well chosen metaphor in the chapter where our text is found, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." As the appointment of a schoolmaster is certainly for the benefit of the pupils; to instruct and discipline them for advancement in duties and in enjoyments, so the law was designed to instruct and discipline mankind for the sublime duties and enjoyments of the religion of Jesus Christ. While his

children are at school, or even before they are of age to profit by such an institution, the kind affectionate father may will to his children independent fortunes. These minors may, notwithstanding they are heirs to this testament of their fathers's, be kept at school, be instructed and disciplined by a faithful master until the time appointed of the father for them to come into possession of their inheritance, and to be free from the government of the school. In this simile it is easy to see, that the children were dealt with according to their merit and demerit; the schoolmaster could do his whole duty to his pupils without concerning himself about their father's will. His authority did not extend to take cognizance of that instrument of grace, nor did that testament which made these children vastly rich infringe in the least on the authority of the schoolmaster. There is no power in the will to screen the disobedient scholar from the faithful hand of righteous discipline. These two dispensations harmonise in doing good to the same persons, in their respective ways. In relation to our subject, the Apostle says in connexion with our text; "Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."

But the objector urges that it is written; "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them;" and "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Let this all be granted; and let it stand without attempting to weaken it in the least; but let us remember with gratitude and joy of heart, that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." And also, that those who were dead in trespasses and in sins, hath God quickened together with Christ. It is true, 'the wages of sin is death;" but it is also true that 'the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Will *the objector now* say, that the curse of the law

is eternal death, and therefore if this curse came upon any, they cannot obtain salvation? Then we reply and say; this objection does not rest on the divine testimony. The words "eternal death," are not in the scriptures. The objector, therefore, has no right to require any further reply. The text says; cursed *is* every one," &c. It does not say; cursed *shall be* every one *in the eternal world*, who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them, *in this world*.

To the Corinthians the Apostle speaks of the ministration of the law as a ministration of death, but he by no means allows it either an eternal duration, or power to prevent in the least degree, the ministration of life. He speaks as follows; "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new-testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

We see, by the Apostle's reasoning, that the law dispensation, being a ministration of death, "was to be done away," and succeeded with the ministration of righteousness; but that these dispensations are opposed to each other, is not allowed by any scripture argument.

This doctrine, that the law is not against the promises of God, which we find abundantly proved from the scriptures which have been noticed, is a doctrine which is plainly taught in the economy of divine providence and in the most essential goveremeut embraced *in human concerns*; I mean the government and econ-

omy of a family. In the divine providence, God has promised (and he fulfils his word) that there shall be summer and winter, seed time and harvest. These blessings do not depend on men, men depend on them; man's labor does not call them forth, but they call men to their work; and accordingly as they labor and wisely improve their advantages, they are rewarded. If they neglect the duties of the season, they are recompensed with want. In a family government and economy, there are many favors bestowed on children, that in the nature of things, cannot depend on the obedience of those who receive them. How many favors does parental love bestow on infancy, favors essential to life, long before the subjects are capable of knowing on whom they depend for support? And in the last will and testament of parental provision, how many valuable legacies are bestowed on children, to which they had no other claim but heirship? But all these blessings which are entirely independent of the conduct of children, have no power to prevent the reasonable exercise of a proper discipline during that period in which the offspring are objects of such an economy. And on the other hand, it is as plainly seen, that this discipline has no power to oppose the interest which the child holds by heirship; but then one seems to establish the other; for that relation which gives the right to adminster discipline, holds also the right of heirship.

From the several points of doctrine, which we have endeavored to support, the following inferences may be drawn.

1st. There is, according to the scriptures, in the moral government, of our heavenly Father, a wisely concerted discipline, by which the faults of men are duly noticed and faithfully and compassionately chastised. But it is not consistent with the design of this dispensation to extend correction or punishment for sin, so as, in any way, to deprive, even the sinner, of the everlasting inheritance which belongs to the sons of God.

The opinion, therefore, that the law of God demands *the everlasting, or eternal* punishment of sinners is, by

no means a scripture doctrine; for surely such a doctrine would prove that the law was against the promises. Such a law, in the room of being a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, would be an unmerciful tyrant, like Pharoah, who held the people of God in bondage, and refused to let them go. This divine law and discipline of our heavenly Father admonishes us to take heed to our ways. Hereby we are advised, commanded, admonished, rebuked, warned; threatened; and in case of obstinate disobedience, and continuance in sin, we are severely punished. But let us always remember that the chastisements of our heavenly Father are for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness.

2d. We may infer from the doctrine we have maintained, that the sense of what St. Peter said to the Jews is equally true respecting all men; "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Those to whom St. Peter spake these words, were those who delivered up Jesus and denied him in the presence of Pilate; they were those who denied the holy One and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them, and killed the Prince of life. "These," Peter said, "were the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers." Now as the promise of the covenant was to "all the kindreds of the earth, and as the testimony of the prophets was equally extensive, we conclude that all the families, all the nations, and all the kindreds of the earth" are the children of the prophetic testimony, and of the covenant of promise. The blessing promised was also mentioned by this Apostle as has been noticed; "Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you, from his iniquities.

Let us conclude with the Apostle's exhortations "*Stand fast,* therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ *hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*"

LECTURE IV

LOVE THE CENTRE OF ALL THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

1 JOHN iv. 16.

God is love.

In the infinite variety of all important subjects to which the rich treasures of divine revelation call our most serious and engaged attention, this, expressed in our text, is unquestionably entitled to the highest rank. However the thoughtless and profane may treat the Supreme disposer of all things, however trifling the name of the Most High may be handed round by polluted lips, one moment's serious attention to the impropriety of such communication is sufficient to convince the reasonable mind, that God is a subject infinitely too great to be introduced into trifling conversation, and infinitely too good to be mentioned by profane lips. But notwithstanding the impropriety and evil, of which mention has been made, are great and heinous, they bear but a scant comparison with the impropriety and evil of representing the great Father of our spirits as a character which would be dishonorable to man, who is but a worm of the dust.

If we lay aside the prejudices which the creeds of men have carefully treasured up in our deceitful hearts, we shall at once be struck with horror at the character which a false education has given to the best of all intelligent beings. The moral evil naturally growing from false notions of the divine character, has so established its empire in the hearts of men, and exercises *such unresisted control* over the temper and spirit of *those who are deceived* by such notions, that there *appears but one remedy*; and this one must be found in

the removing of those errors, by the clear shining of divine truth in the understanding. The particular and most special object of the present discourse is to contribute, at least, a humble attempt to remove wrong views of God from the mind, by showing that all the divine attributes harmonize in love; which view of the character of our heavenly Father, seems evidently comprehended in the text of which choice has been made.

There are but a few passages of scripture which speak in a direct manner of what God is. He is called a "*fountain of living waters*," by the Prophet Jeremiah. "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." This is a most striking representation of true and false religion. Love is a fountain of living waters. It is a living fountain, one that is never dry. This is true religion; it has no hatred in it; it works no ill to its neighbor; it measures to others what it is willing to receive. But false religion is any thing and every thing but love. It is something *hewed out;* that is, it is the work of invention and art. The living water of divine love is not in it. It pretends to love, but hatred is its most essential ingredient. It is based on enmity. If we disallow enmity, false religion cries out, heresy, the foundation of religion is gone!—St. Paul says; "*Our God is a consuming fire.*" Love is a consuming fire to all the hay, wood, and stubble which error has introduced into religion. "Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved: Yet so as by fire." The fire of divine love seeks to consume *nothing* but that which is injurious to the sinner, who *is the* object of divine love.

The divine teacher said to the woman of Samaria; "God *is a spirit, and seeketh such to worship him, who worship him in spirit and in truth.*" Love is this spirit of God, and love is the spirit in which God is truly worshipped. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

It may tend to promote the object in view to mention a summary of moral attributes, and proceed to notice them both distinctly and conjunctively, by which their harmony in divine love may be made to appear. We read in Revelations, of the "Seven spirits of God," which we may suppose comprehend the perfection of the communicable attributes of the divine Being. Without any design to be arbitrary, we will name seven moral attributes; and though some may think a less number would comprehend the whole, and others, that a much greater number should be mentioned, it seems safe to calculate that the perfect number, seven, was designed to comprehend the whole and nothing more.—And if we may be favored with a view of the harmony of the seven which we shall name, no doubt the candid mind will be satisfied, that if more moral attributes could be named, they would all be found to harmonize in love.

The seven we shall name are the following: Wisdom, Knowledge, Power, Justice, Truth, Mercy,—and Love in which they all harmonize.

Wisdom is that attribute of mind by which designs are drawn and plans are laid. It regards things, circumstances, causes and effects as they relate to each other. The wisdom of any plan is seen in the cooperation of its several parts tending efficiently to produce what the projector designs. Should any part of a plan fail of eventuating in the object designed, that failure, were it ever so small, would prove a lack of wisdom in drawing the plan.

When we view the visible objects of creation, their existence seems to fill the mind with admiration, and *as soon as our thoughts* advance to the consideration *of the regular motions* of the heavenly bodies, wisdom *irresistibly attracts* our notice, and seems to waken up

a spark of devotion to the great Author of the universe. Continuing to meditate on the order, regularity, and harmony of the works of nature and providence; and to notice the concatenation of causes and effects which produce whatever is fit and good in the order and nature of things, no language seems more proper than that of the Psalmist; "O Lord, how manfold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all."

Knowledge is a principle of intellectual nature by which the simple facts relating to things are comprehended or understood. This attribute in God is an all-seeing eye; from its pervading sight nothing can be hid. Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world.

Power in the divine Being is that ability by which all the purposes of his vast and infinite scheme are carried into execution.' "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

Justice is that attribute of God, by which a righteous and equitable administration is directed towards all moral accountable beings; and by which every such being receives a just recompence of reward accordingly as moral powers are exercised. Divine justice likewise requires that all moral beings should act in such a manner as to discharge every duty and obligation which the connexions and relations in which they are placed render necessary. "Justice and judgment are the habitations of his throne."

Truth is whatever is opposed to falsehood, and is the reality of all things, circumstances and events, past, present and future. This is forever with him who varies not, for "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he."

Mercy is that divine perfection of God which pities and relieves from sin and wretchedness, those who stand in need of such compassion, "For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." "According to his mercy he saved us."

Love is a property which delights in an object, care-

fully avoids doing it any harm, and uses all its means to administer good; "God is love."—Now, as it is the fixed, unalterable nature of love to do good to all the beings who are its objects, and to render them as blessed as possible with the use of all the means which love can command, it is seen at once, that whatever plans are laid so as to promote the best interest of those creatures who are the objects of the divine love, is in fact the wisdom of God; and as those plans perfectly harmonize with the benevolent purposes of love, it is evident that the wisdom which contrived them is in perfect unison with love.

We here find a fair opportunity to look into the extent of the goodness of God, and that salvation which is brought to man by Jesus Christ, who is said to be "The wisdom of God and the power of God." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." God so loved the world that he sent his own wisdom that the world might be saved by it. If the wisdom of God is not in perfect harmony with his love, he surely would not have sent his wisdom to carry into effect the purposes of love. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Here both the object and the means are clearly set forth. God loved us while we did not love him. In consequence of this love he designed to do us a favor. The means which he used was to send his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. But if by becoming the propitiation for our sins, no benefit, but an injury should result to those whom God loved then the means would frustrate the object and prove the want of wisdom in the plan.

There is a doctrine in the christian church, that contends, that millions, yea far the greatest part of the human family will be infinitely more miserable in the eternal world, than they would have been if Jesus had never come into the world and died for their sins. If

this doctrine be allowed to stand in harmony with the wisdom of God, it must be granted that his wisdom is hostile to his love, for "love worketh no ill." But the divine testimony assures us, that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." If therefore, the world or any part of the world should fail of salvation, and be made miserable in the future world in consequence of what Christ has done, the thing for which he was sent not being fulfilled, and that for which he was not sent being effected, proves the want of wisdom in the plan.

How is it possible for God to exercise a wisdom which is infinite in a way to frustrate the design of his own immutable love? If we examine ever so minutely into the plans and schemes, the causes and effects, the immense, the subtle and the various workings of divine providence, are we not the more convinced of the truth of that ancient declaration, "The Lord is good unto all and his tender mercies are over all his works!" As a proof of the truth of this testimony the Prophet further observes; "Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." This is the way by which God makes himself known to be good to his creatures, that is, by actually doing them good. St. Paul said, "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." How immense are the love, the goodness of God which are manifested continually in the temporal bounties of his universal providence. Cast your eyes round on every side, carefully inspect the condition of every living thing, and say whether the wisdom of God does not harmonize with universal love. And yet the Apostle allows all this luminous evidence to be no more than twilight compared with the more perfect display of the divine goodness in the dispensation of the gospel of *Jesus Christ;* for notwithstanding the evidence of *divine goodness* which were continually manifested in *the munificient* providence of God, the people, who

were the subjects of such goodness, were ignorant of him and walked in their own way; concerning which the Apostle says; "The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent." This special command to repent and turn from dumb idols to serve the living God, was given forth in the more glorious evidences of the mercy and goodness of God communicated in the gospel.

An attempt to illustrate the wisdom which characterises the scheme of the gospel, and the harmony of its several parts, as set forth in the scriptures, would be a much more extensive undertaking than our present limits would justify, if there were no want of ability to do justice to such a subject. It may therefore suffice to remark, that by a careful attention to ancient promises and prophecies concerning a Messiah, his appearance in the world, the wonderful works wrought by his miraculous power; the shameful treatment which he received among men, his death, and the manner of it, his resurrection from the dead, the infallible proofs of the same, his ascension, the gifts bestowed on the Apostles whom he appointed to promulgate his gospel, and the wonderful success which attended their ministry, by which the religion of Jesus was established on a foundation which can never be removed, we are led to say; "This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Who will undertake to point out a single item in all this vast scheme of infinite wisdom which does not perfectly harmonise with the love of God to mankind. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, foolishness; but unto them who are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God." This is that "wisdom that is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." This is that wisdom which was with the Almighty when he created all things, "rejoicing always before

him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth and whose delights were with the sons of men."

That the divine knowledge is in perfect unison with the love of God to his creatures, we must grant for many reasons, some of which are the following.

First. That we may avoid introducing imperfection into the divine nature, which is nothing short of idolatry. Whenever a desire to do good is in exercise, and the person who possesses this desire knows for certainty, that this desire can never be realized or accomplished, there is proof positive of imperfection.

Secondly. That we may avoid introducing infelicity into the divine Being. For if his universal unchangeable love run in one straight line, and his infallible knowledge disagree with it, we must allow that this disagreement produces an infelicity whose magnitude corresponds with the greatness of those infinite, discordant attributes! Whoever possesses love which inclines the agent to do good to another, and knows at the same time that this will never be effected, must, in the nature of things, be unhappy to a degree which corresponds with the force of this forever unsatisfied desire.

Thirdly. That we may avoid charging God with folly, which we should most surely do if we suppose that in consequence of his love to the world he sent his Son to save the world, when at the same time he knew that this salvation would not be effected. Should a parent who tenderly loves his child see it in distress, no doubt he would try all means which should appear at all favorable to relieve it; but, while he had reason, he would never make use of means which he knew would, in the room of relieving from distress, increase it seven fold. The divine testimony says; "God will have all men to be saved," and that as a mean of this salvation, the one Mediator "gave himself a ransom for all." Now if we allow that the divine knowledge comprehended the fact that all men will not be saved, we surely charge God with the folly of using means to effect what he knew would not be effected. There *are among men,* many who are called learned, and

many who are unlearned, who are fully persuaded, that all the means which our heavenly Father has seen fit to employ for the purpose of saving sinners, will in the most of instances forever fail of their designed utility. But have we not every good reason for believing, that if the divine Being had been fully persuaded of this, he never would have used those abortive means? In order to avoid an endless series of inconsistencies we are compelled to acknowledge a plain simple truth, that the infinite knowledge of God is in perfect harmony with his boundless unchangeable love, which constitutes him infinitely and consummately happy; and lays a foundation on which the human mind may rest and enjoy the sweetest possible repose. How often is it the case, that we are called to witness and to pass through dark scenes of trial in which our weak discernment can see no utility, and we are pining with despair, and saying "all these things are against me;" but how divinely comforting is the thought so happily expressed by the Poet;

> The clouds you so much dread
> Are big with mercy, and will break
> In blessings on your head;
> Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
> But trust him for his grace;
> Behind a frowning providence,
> He hides his smiling face.

That the divine power ever moves according to the directions of the love of God, there is no room to doubt. Power without will to put it in motion and direct it, is dormant and effects nothing. And as it is evident, that God cannot will contrary to his nature which is love, so it is equally evident that his power never effects any thing which his love does not desire. That Almighty Power which controls all worlds, all beings, and all elements, moves only as it is directed by the gentle, kind, and merciful principles of divine love.

The divine attribute which the sensual, partial wisdom of this world has armed with principles hostile to love, is justice. Justice has been held up as an *unmerciful foe to the transgressor*, knowing no favor, but

demanding the everlasting destruction of all who come short of obedience. If we allow this sentiment concerning the demands of divine justice, is it not evident that justice is opposed to love in such demands? This cannot be denied. Those who hold the opinion that sinners must be punished everlastingly in the future state, never undertake to prove such an opinion by arguing that sinners are the objects of divine love. But justice is always referred to as the attribute which is opposed to the sinner's salvation. Now if justice and love are opposed to each other in God, does not this constitute transgression? "Sin is the trangression of the law," justice is the law; and if love be opposed to justice, it is opposed to the law, and transgresses the law! But St. Paul says; "love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." If love fulfils the law, it certainly is not opposed to justice.

We will for a few minutes, attempt to examine divine justice, both as to its requirements in its precepts, and in its administration of punishments; and carefully compare with the dictates of divine love, in order to see if there be any disagreement. What then does the divine law require? The blessed Saviour explains the law as follows; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." This is what divine justice demands of all men; this is the whole law, as saith the Apostle; "All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Now compare this divine requisition with what love requires. Love most surely cannot require any thing short of itself. If one person love another sincerely, can any thing short of love in return give satisfaction? The parents of a family of children love their offspring most affectionately; this love is commended to the children by a thousand favors. varied according to their wants. Now what

were any quality in the divine Being which is opposed to our well being, it is a most unreasonable thing to require us to love that quality. The result then of this part of the inquiry is this, namely, justice and love both agree in requiring us to love that which is altogether for our own profit, and it is not in the nature of either to require us to love any object beyond our interest. We will not say that this may not be considered rather a new kind of argument; but even if it is, this circumstance ought, by no means, to be urged against the propriety of it; it may be urged as a proper occasion for carefully examining it. If it be necessary to make it still more evident, we may ask, what or whose interest is to be served by our loving that which is of no benefit to ourselves? No one will be so erroneous as to contend that any benefit can result to the divine being from our love to him; and certainly not from our loving him beyond our interest in him, as it will, at once, be allowed, that it is impossible to love him more than we are benefitted by him. This argument holds equally good as it applies to any one, or all of the divine attributes. We cannot love wisdom, knowledge, power, justice, truth, mercy or love, to a greater degree than we are benefitted by these divine principles.

As we have enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing a perfect agreement in the preceptive requirements of divine love and justice, it will now increase our rational felicity if we can see these divine attributes equally harmonize in retributive requisitions. But as this argument has been instituted for the purpose of showing that divine justice does not oppose the sinner's salvation, we may confine our present remarks to punitive requirements. The subject now to be determined is, what kind of punishment does divine justice require to be inflicted on the transgressor for his offences, for what purpose, and to what extent? Answer: As it is not in the nature of divine justice to do any thing to *prevent its own precepts* from being obeyed, it can *never punish the sinner in* any way to prevent his final *obedience; but on the* other hand, it keeping an eye

does this love require in return? It requires the children to love their parents. The Apostle says; "We love him, because he first loved us." Nothing will answer as a substitute for love. If the children attend ever so punctually to the performance of every duty enjoined in the precepts of the parents, if love be wanting, all is unsavory. Love is the salt that must season every performance in order to render it acceptable. St. Paul must have had this view of our subject when he wrote the following; "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, and have not charity, (the same with love) I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." And I think we may say according to divine truth, that, that sort of justice which is destitute of love, is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; it has sounded through all christendom and tinkled in all our ears. And as it is destitute of love itself, so it has produced none in its votaries.

Now as we have seen that justice and love are united in their requirements, it may add no little strength to the evidence already adduced to look at the principle on which they urge their united claim.

In order for any demand to be just, it must be founded on a reasonable principle. So if justice and love demand of us, that we love God, and one another, it is proper to ascertain the principle on which the propriety of this demand is seen. Love and hatred are what we are necessarily inclined to; and we are necesarily inclined to love that which is agreeable to us, and to hate what is otherwise. It would then be a most unreasonable thing to require us to *love what is* not lovely, and to hate what is not *hateful.* If then we are required to love God, it is *because he is* lovely, if rightly understood. If there

directly on the original object embraced in the very design of the precept, awards that kind of punishment which is best calculated to work repentance and reformation, which is the object of punishment, and administers it until the desired effect is produced. It seems impossible to extend punishment any further, unless we arm it with weapons hostile to its own requirements. That the hearer may see this subject, if possible, still plainer, we will ask, for what possible purpose can justice require any punishment to be inflicted on the sinner that does not tend to the sinner's benefit? As no one's interest is the object of the precept, except those on whom it is binding, why should the punishment for disobedience seek any other interest than that which is aimed at by the precept? We know it is said that it is necessary to punish an offender, as a terror to others, to prevent their committing offences. But if this be allowed, in room of its making at all against our argument, it goes directly to establish it; therefore it is admitted.

Do you ask how this is? Answer: If it be right and reasonable to punish an offender for the benefit of others, it supposes a common interest exists between the one punished and those for whose benefit we say the punishment is inflicted. This being the principle on which the punishment is administered, it cannot be inflicted beyond the limits of this common interest.

If we are correct in this reasoning, we have the increased felicity sought, for it will be seen at once that divine love as much requires this punishment as justice does; for love cannot require less than that which is for the good of its object. O the beauty! The glory of the scene which here opens on our wondering eyes! Divine truth, a golden line, appears lovely beyond description, and mercy lies parallel from the begining to the end.

To conclude; The imperfect view we have been able to take of the immense subject of this discourse, seems amply sufficient to give elevated thoughts of the divine character, thoughts calculated to raise our af-

fections from every meaner object, and place them on God. With what gratitude do we turn our eyes towards heaven, and realize that God who is love, is our Father; that all his infinitely glorious attributes harmonize in love; that they all work in unison, aiming at the highest possible improvement and felicity of all moral beings. With what pleasing reflections do we behold each other. Children of the same Father, heirs of the same inheritance, pilgrims on the same journey, and bound to the same eternal home.

How reasonable it is that we should love, sincerely love the God of love. How reasonable is it that we should love one another. Our pretensions to religion, without love, are but frauds practised on ourselves. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Love is a "fountain of living waters, a place of broad rivers and streams," to which we are invited in the following divine language, with which I close;" Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

LECTURE V.

MAN ORIGINALLY MADE SUBJECT TO VANITY AND TO HOPE.

ROMANS, viii. 20.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.

By *creature* in our text, the Apostle evidently means the same as he does by the "*whole creation*" in the 22d verse. In this connexion the whole created humanity is three times called "the creature;" and once, "the whole creation." The subject of the Apostle's labor in the place where our text is found, seems to be that of presenting to view one of the most pleasing, consoling, and encouraging subjects, on which he delighted to dwell. In the 16th verse he notices the testimony of the divine Spirit, that we are the children of God. From this he proceeds to show our heirship in God, and our joint heirship with Christ. The consideration of the infinite riches and glory to which mankind are entitled, seemed to call into notice the present state of suffering to which man is subjected in this mortal life; concerning which he speaks as follows; "For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption *into the glorious* liberty of the children of God. *For we know that* the whole creation groaneth *and travaileth in pain* together until now; and not

only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." By *our body* the author means the same as he does by *creature*, and by the *whole creation*. Believers who have the first fruits of the spirit are distinguished in the foregoing quotation from the rest of the one body, called the *creature* and the whole creation, but in such a way as to show that they were in the same condition with the rest, groaning and waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the whole body. And it is worthy of special notice, that by *first fruits of the spirit*, the Apostle evidently intimates that the redemption of the whole creature which was made subject to vanity was considered as the whole or general harvest. As under the law a few only partook of the first firuits, but all were fed of the general harvest; so but a few seem to be partakers of the first fruits of the spirit, while the whole human family is entitled to the redemption of our body.

The vanity to which the creature was made subject may comprehend all the imperfections incident to our mortal state, but especially and particularly the sufferings which the author mentioned in the context. He was not made subject to vanity on account of his own will, for he could have had no will until he was created; but he was made subject to vanity by reason of him who subjected him in hope. The opinion, therefore, that man was constituted in flesh and blood, first a perfectly holy being, but was made subject to vanity by sin, is as contrary to the plain declaration of our text as it is repugnant to the dictates of reason.

We shall now proceed to examine the common doctrine called *the fall of man*, and to show the want of both scripture and reason for its support. Such language as the following; "before the fall, since the fall, the fall of man, in Adam's fall we sinned all," is common among christian people, and is so much used by authors and preachers that people in general suppose it to be Bible language, and feel confident that the scriptures justify such representations. But notwithstanding all that has been written and spoken on this

subject, and without calling the sincerity of any in question, it seems necessary to inform the hearer that no such language was ever used by the lawgiver of Israel, the prophets who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the Lord Jesus, or his Apostles. We read nothing in the scriptures of Adam's falling from the state in which he was created, no more than we read of Cain's falling from the state in which he was created. We are informed that Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, and we are informed that Cain slew his brother, but we are not told that they did these things in one constitution of nature, and fell into another constitution by so doing. If Adam had not been constituted in an imperfect state how could he have sinned in that state? It is not supposed that Adam fell out of the state in which he was created before he sinned, therefore he must have sinned in the state in which he was formed of the dust of the ground. If he sinned in the state in which he was first formed, then it is evident that he was possessed of no perfection or holiness that secured him against sin. What alteration was there effected in the constitution of Adam by what is called the fall? It seems according to the account given in Genesis, that Adam was not very dissimilar to men in all ages of the world; he was led into sin by his companion. She who was formed and given to Adam for a help-meet was the means of leading him into sin; and how many thousands in all ages of the world have been led into sin by this kind blessing of heaven! Nor does it appear from any account we have in scripture, that Adam was any more inflexible than his posterity in general. We have no account of his withstanding strong temptations for a long time; it seems the first temptation was successful. If we should carefully compare the conduct of Adam with what we read of Joseph, candor would conclude at once in favor of the latter. The former did sin, but Joseph did not. But here we should do great injustice if we should *contend that there* was such a difference in the *constitutions of the two* as to produce the difference *which appears in their* conduct; for this difference

might have arisen from circumstances distinct from natural constitution.

The common doctrine on the subject of this inquiry supposes that there was a real change produced in man's very nature by the first transgression; and such a change too, as to render the creature radically sinful and totally inclined to sin. But we read no such account where those things are particularly recorded. So far from any thing of this kind, we are not informed that either Adam or Eve ever committed a second crime. The faithful word informs us that these first parents of mankind lived a long time after eating of the forbidden fruit, but we hear nothing of their living vicious lives. The second sin of which we read is the murder of Abel, and this crime was so heinous even in the mind of Cain, that he thought he should have to die by the hand of some avenger. If man's very nature was so changed by Adam's sin as common opinion supposes, why have we no account of Adam's wicked life and of Eve's abominations? Why is there no mention made of the wickedness of Abel? Did not Abel partake of this fall? Or was it in Adam's power to communicate, or not communicate this sinful nature by procreation? The fact is we have no authority for this doctrine which is called the fall.

The most extravagant part of the common doctrine of the first transgression and its consequences, relates to the means by which Eve was beguiled. So immaculate and holy were our first parents, that had it not been for the beguiling acts of a superior being, says common doctrine, Eve could never have been tempted with success. This presumed, the next thing is to fabricate a story about a fallen Angel who was once for glory and beauty the morning star of heaven; but who by rebellion fell from the state in which he was created, and was consigned to the burning lake for the punishment of his sin. This prince of devils, it *is believed,* assumed the body of a serpent and *persuaded her to* believe that she could better her condition *by disobeying* her Maker. Milton has told this

story in such a fanciful manner, that the sentiment has been incorporated into the christian faith so that a denial of it is the same as a denial of the whole christian doctrine, in the opinion which we are examining.

Now if this notion of a fallen Angel &c. be a fact, why are the scriptures silent on the subject? Where we read in Genesis of the serpent tempting Eve, there is nothing said concerning a fallen Angel called the devil. But let us ask how this Angel came to sin. It is contended that Eve was so perfect that she never would have sinned unless she had been beguiled by a superior mind. Now if this were the case how shall we account for the sin of the Angel who fell and became a devil? Was he less holy before he sinned, than our first parents? If he could sin without a tempter why could not man sin without a tempter? It must be allowed that this Angel sinned on account of imperfection in his nature, without a tempter, or it must be granted that he had one to tempt him. But whether he was tempted by some other being, or by reason of his constitutional infirmity, both alike prove his imperfection; for if he had been perfect, temptations could not have risen from within him, nor from without could they have had any power upon him. This is equally applicable to man. He must have been imperfect, and subject to vanity or he could not have been led into sinby temptations from within or from without.

The hearer will easily perceive that there is no other way to account for the first transgression than by admitting a constitutional imperfection, in the agent; he will furthermore see that a sinful being can have no power to lead one who is perfect in holiness into transgression; all beings, therefore, who are sinful must have been made subject to vanity, which is the state in which man stood when formed of the dust of the ground, and according to the Apostle's testimony in our text.

As it seems impossible to avoid this conclusion concerning *the imperfect state* of man in the beginning, *we shall consent, at once,* to the idea in our text, that *the creature was made* subject to vanity, not because

of his own will, but by reason of the will of his Maker who saw fit, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, to subject the creature to all the vanity of this mortal state in hope of a better and more perfect state hereafter.

Let us, in the next place, proceed to examine the account which inspiration has given of the first temptation and sin; and let us do this with honest and candid minds, with a determination to be satisfied with the scripture account.

"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made, and he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" To this question the woman returned the true answer, to which the serpent replied; "Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Here is the whole account of the first temptation. And here let the question be honestly and candidly examined, (viz.) What is there in this account about an Angel's falling from heaven to hell, and coming from hell to the earth, and of his tempting Eve? Surely there is not a word that so much as intimates any thing on the subject. But it is contended, that the serpent could not have tempted Eve, if some evil agent had not been in him and moved him to perform so crafty a work. Why then does the account say that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field? If the temptation was the craftiness of some other creature, and not the subtlety of the serpent, it was different from the scripture representation, which suggests no other subtlety in the case than that of the serpent. Moreover, if it had been some invisible agent, who, entering into the serpent, wrought the temptation in question, it was that invisible agent, and not the serpent that was the tempter, and ought to have been the subject of the malediction which was pronounced on the serpent. "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, because thou hast *done this,* thou art cursed above all cattle, and above

every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." All this was said to the serpent, but there was nothing said to that abominable wicked Angel that sinned in heaven, and who was banished to hell for his sin, and from hell came to this earth and tempted Eve!

By this time the hearer will ask if the speaker really supposes that a literal serpent did actually talk to the woman and influence her to eat of a forbidden fruit? No, he does not. He humbly conceives that this account is given in a scriptural allegory, which may all be explained by a little attention to the scriptures. In scripture, the serpent is a hieroglyphic of wisdom.—Jesus commanded his disciples to be wise as serpents. As there are two sorts of wisdom mentioned in scripture, so they are represented by two kinds of serpents. The Apostle James speaks of wisdom as follows; "Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show, out of a good conversation, his works with meekness and wisdom. But if ye have bitter envy and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

The wisdom of God is represented by the rod of Moses which became a serpent; and the wisdom of this world which cometh to naught, is represented by the rods of the wise men and sorcerers of Egypt, which, likewise became serpents. The superiority of the wisdom of God over the wisdom of the flesh is represented by Aaron's rod swallowing up the magicians' rods. Another representation of these two wisdoms we have in the account given of the fiery serpents that bit and destroyed the *Israelites in* the wilderness, and that bra

zen serpent which Moses made by the special command of God, whose virtues were a sovereign cure for the deadly stings of the fiery serpents. These fiery serpents represent the wisdom of this world, and the evil effects of their bite are a very just representation of the evil effects of false religion. And our blessed Saviour has made use of the brazen serpent to represent himself. He says; "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." When the Israelites were bitten by the fiery serpents, and the deadly poison was diffused throughout their distressed bodies, only a look at the brazen serpent on the pole effected a radical cure of the deadly wound. So by looking unto Jesus, who is the wisdom of God, we are recovered from the dreadful contagion of our earthly sensual wisdom. Thus the promised seed bruises the serpent's head.

Let us look in the next place, and ascertain if possible, the source of this sensual wisdom which is enmity against the wisdom of God, and which tempts us to sin. St. James says; "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."—To the Galatians St. Paul says; "I say then, walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Is not the account given by St. Paul and St. James, a plain, reasonable representation of the power of the fleshly nature to strive against the spirit of divine wisdom in us, to tempt us and to lead us into sin which produces death? And if this be the way that we are tempted, have we any reason to believe that it is not the way in which Eve was tempted in the beginning? Yea, is not this contentious, sensual wisdom of the flesh, the serpent which beguiled the woman? *And is it not* the same serpent which now beguiles

both men and women and leads them into sin and death? Furthermore, St. Paul says; "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." These works are all the natural productions of our fleshly, earthly nature, and the wisdom which is earthly, sensual, devilish, is the serpent which beguiles us. Now if we have found the real source of our own temptations, we have also found the source of the temptations of all mankind, not excepting the mother of our race. Flesh and blood was the same in the beginning as it is now, its powers were the same, its lusts were the same, its wisdom was the same, and it is to the powers and appetites of the flesh that every sin we commit may be traced.

St. Paul says; "The woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Could she have been deceived if she had been truly wise? No, but she was made subject to vanity. If she had been perfectly satisfied with her condition would she have disobeyed her Maker for the sake of being more wise? And was it not perfectly natural for her to wish to have her husband with her in this wisdom? There appears nothing in this whole account that differs from our common experience and observation. There is no condition in which man can be placed, in the present state, that can bound his desires, or render him perfectly satisfied with what he possesses. There has been much said concerning the happy, the consummately happy state in which Adam and Eve were placed in the garden; long accounts have been dressed up in all the beauties of rhetoric concerning the felicity of the happy pair before transgression. But to describe the dreadful consequences of the first sin, the calamitous change which it effected in all nature here on earth, and the endless wo to which the whole posterity of Adam was exposed by it, has exhausted all the powers of human imagination. And *yet, if we look* for these things in the scrip-

tures we find them not. What is said of the happy state of our first parents before they knew good and evil? Nothing. How does the word of divine revelation expatiate on the miserable state into which the first transgression brought man? It extends the subject no further than human experience in all ages of the world extends it. Sin was attended with guilt and fear according to the first account we have of it, and experience has taught us all, that guilt and fear are its natural consequences. But that the first transgression was attended with worse consequences than the sins which were committed afterward, we find no authority for believing. And what would be the fruits of our researches should we examine what the scriptures say concerning the state of endless wo to which the first sin exposed the whole human race? Why in fact we should search in vain to find any thing of the kind in the word of God. Even the serpent had no malediction pronounced on him, that either deprived him of his natural food or extended beyond his natural life; much less, if possible, was there any suggestion either to the man or the woman, that the consequences of their sin would extend into a future state.

All the vain notions which the earthly, sensual wisdom of this world has framed on this subject are evidences in support of what we have endeavoured to make evident, namely, that imperfection and sin manifest themselves in our strife to be wise by violating the word of God; and that vanity to which man is the most inclined, is seen in his inventions by which he renders truth, which is perfectly simple in itself, obscure and mysterious.

But shall it be said, because God has made the creature subject to all this vanity, that he is therefore unfriendly to his offspring? No, my brethren, this is not the case. Blessed be God, though in his infinite wisdom he saw best to subject his creatures to vanity in this mortal state, he has made extensive and ample provisions in his providence to render this vain state convenient in an infinite variety of ways, and has *so bountifully* scattered down his blessings that we

have constant reason to rejoice in his goodness. He did not forsake man in the beginning of his career in sin, but though he manifested his holy disapprobation of the defection of his children, he made them sensible likewise of his fatherly kindness and unchangeable goodness. How affecting is the account we have of the voice of the Lord God in the cool of the day calling after Adam. How tender are the words; "Adam, Adam, where art thou?" Who can hear the language of divine mercy expressed in the promise of the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head, without emotions of lively gratitude? That all gracious, merciful Creator, who made the creature subject to vanity, subjected him in hope.

The reason assigned by the Apostle, why the creature was subjected to vanity in hope, he expresses in the verse following our text in these words; "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Just above he had said; "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the maifestation of the sons of God."

As the creature was not the author of this state of vanity, so he is not the author of that hope in which he is subjected; no nor is he the author of that glorious liberty of the sons of God into which the whole creation shall be delivered, from the bondage of corruption.

This hope of life and immortality, our kind and merciful Creator has implanted in our nature, and it seems to exist as universally as the idea of a supreme Being. Those notions which owe their origin to the inventions of priests, and their standing to the superstition *of the ignorant are* not universal; they are lim

ited to a certain denominations or nations, and have nothing in them which compares with the wisdom and goodness of the divine Being. But the universality of the hope of a future, happy existence, very fitly compares with the impartial goodness of God, from which circumstance it acquires no small share of its natural evidence.

But one of the principal objects of the gospel of Jesus Christ seems to have been, to present us with full and adequate proof of the doctrine of a future happy state for all mankind.

Speaking of Jesus, the Apostle says; "Who hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

The hearer is cautioned against the notion, that our Saviour was sent into the world to go through a process in order to purchase, or procure life and immortality for man; for he came to suffer, die, and rise from the dead, that he might bring life and immortality to light; that is, that he might make that manifest which the creature groaned and travailed for, and which God had given unto us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

This glorious liberty of the sons of God, in hope of which the whole creation groans and travails in pain, is the inheritance of which we are joint-heirs with Christ. Jesus our fore-runner hath entered into glory, and being the head of every man, is "the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

From the doctrine of our text may be drawn the following inferences:

1st. The opinion which has long maintained that the first temptation which led to the introduction of sin into our world, was the instigation of a fallen Angel, appears to be without foundation or authority in the scriptures, which plainly indicate that the constitutional infirmities of flesh and blood are in fact the source *from whence* all sinful temptations rise.

2d. That the common notion which christian people entertain and cultivate in the minds of their children, of an invisible agent, who was once a holy angel in heaven, that now continually accompanies people wherever they go, and is all the time tempting them to sin, is nothing more than an invention of the wisdom of the flesh, and is supported by no other means than superstition. Is there even a child, who has come to the years of discretion, that cannot see, that in order for this evil agent to do all that is attributed to him, he must be every where at the same time? It seems reasonable that we should be rightly informed on this subject, because if we have enemies to contend with, it is surely necessary to know them and to know their strength. Our appetites and passions are at all times with us; and though they are all good in the place for which they were made, and for the use for which they were created, yet as they are blind in proportion to their strength, they will surely lead us into sin if they are not governed by wisdom and prudence.

3d. There appears no authority for the common opinion, that the first transgression produced a radical change in the moral constitution of man, or that in consequence of this first sin, man became totally depraved and altogether opposed to all good, and inclined wholly to all evil. Nor does it appear that there was any such change effected in the physical constitution of the creature, as to communicate any taint to posterity. If even Cain had been wholly inclined to evil by nature, he would have been as likely to take the life of Abel without the occasion mentioned in the Scriptures as with it.—And if Abel had been wholly inclined to evil, he would have been as likely to take the life of Cain, and even that of Adam and Eve, as Cain to take his life. Before sin took place it required a temptation to produce it, and since the first transgression the case has always been the same; every crime is preceded by temptation, which would not be required if man was naturally altogether inclined to evil.

4th. The religion of Jesus affords us divine evidences *in support of that* glorious hope of life and immor

tality in which the whole created humanity was made subject to vanity. How infinitely rich is this blessed hope! This is the "anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail where our fore-runner hath for us entered." Calmly leaning on this, Faith casts her longing eyes beyond the proud swellings of the Jordan of death, sees the inviting land of promise, lays hold of the earnest of the inheritance, and sings the triumphant song; "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

LECTURE. VI.

SALVATION IMPARTIAL AND UNIVERSAL.

ISAIAH xxv. 6, 7, 8.

And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it."

THE first subject of inquiry found in this portion of divine truth is to ascertain what the inspired author means by the mountain of which he speaks in our text.

The same Prophet in his 2d chapter speaks as follows; "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established upon the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." As the prophet here speaks of the establishment of the mountain of the Lord's house upon the top of the mountains, it seems to indicate the setting up of the divine power and government over the powers and polities of this world; the exalting of the mountain of the Lord's house above the hills signifies the exaltation of the divine economy and government over all the powers of the earth. The same in substance is found in the 2d chapter of Daniel, where the four great empires of the world are particularly characterised, their dissolution represented, and the kingdom of God set up and established. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; *and the wind carried* them away, that no place was *found for them; and* the stone that smote the image *became a great* mountain, and filled the whole earth

This is explained as follows; "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

The gospel covenant is represented by mount Sion, in the epistle to the Hebrews; "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," &c. Here the same which is called a mountain is called the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. In the epistle to the Galatians the two covenants are represented by the allegory of Sarah and Hagar; "For this Agar is mount Sina, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage, with her children. But Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all." This is the same Jerusalem of which mention is made in the 21st of Revelations, as follows: "And I John saw the holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband." This mount Sion, this heavenly, new Jerusalem, this city of the living God is the mountain of the Lord's house which is to be established upon the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and unto which all nations are to flow. All nations will finally submit to the laws and government of the gospel, and be willing subjects of him who "shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth, of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end."

As the prophet informs us, that all nations shall flow to this mountain of the Lord's house, so in our text he says; "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things," which invites us to the consideration of the universality of the grace of the gospel.

The divinity of this testimony is visible on the face of it. It is like every thing which belongs to the wisdom and goodness of God. There is no partiality in

it. Every thing contrived by man discovers its origin by its partiality; so whatever is revealed from God proves itself to be from him by its impartiality. This universal impartial language is the language which the Holy Ghost saw fit to use to express the extensiveness of the divine goodness. The promises of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, expressive of the gospel covenant are recorded in similar language. God certified the fathers, that in the promised seed all the nations and all the families of the earth should be blessed. These promises perfectly harmonise with the prophecy under consideration. In this mountain, in this seed, in this covenant, in this kingdom, in this city, in this government the Lord of host shall make unto all people a feast of fat things. The same universality is expressed in the 2d Psalm. "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Like unto this is the following in the 22d Psalm, "All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the governor among the nations." This word *kindreds*, is used by St. Peter in the 3d of Acts. "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with the fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." According to this divine declaration, all the kindreds of the earth are the children, and if children, then heirs of the testimony of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with the fathers. In prospect of these great and glorious things of the kingdom of God, the prophet David says, in the 64th psalm; "All men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doings." In the 72d psalm we find the following; "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and *from the river unto the* ends of the earth—men shall

be blessed in him, all nations shall call him blessed—all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." Psalm 86th, "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee O Lord; and shall glorify thy name, for thou art great and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone." In bearing such testimony as the foregoing, David was a man "after God's own heart." In addition to what has been quoted from the prophet Isaiah, the following may be mentioned; Chapter 52d, "Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Chap. 53—"All we, like sheep, have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all—He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Chapter 49th, "And he said, it is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the ends of the earth." Time would fail us to recite all this kind of testimony from the prophets who spake of the coming of the Just One, and of the glory that should follow. We find in the New Testament many arguments and declarations corresponding with the promises of God and the sayings of the prophet on this glorious subject of universal grace. Jesus said, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved." The beloved disciple says; "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world." Again he says that "Jesus Christ the righteous is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world." St. Paul bestows much argument to show that "where sin abounded, grace hath much *more abounded*; and that as by the offence of one,

judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." He exhorts Timothy to pray and give thanks for all men, because God will have all men to be saved, and as a reason for this he says, that the one Mediator gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Having presented the hearer with this very limited sketch of the divine testimony in favor of the universal goodness of God to mankind, a humble desire is felt that we may now look with enlightened eyes and candid minds, to see how this doctrine agrees with the works and ways of God which are visible.

Can we see in all the works of God, any instance where the Creator has discovered any want of goodness to the creature which he has made? Is there any thing that we can point out in his universal providence that is a proof of a design to harm the works of his hands? Every animal, every fish, every bird, every reptile and every insect speaks forth the goodness of its Creator. Is there a nation on the earth who are so treated by the divine Being, that they can say to the world, we have never received a favor from our Creator? Is there an individual among men who will stand forth and protest against all the doings of God, and say, I have received nothing but evil from the hand that formed me? Is there a son or a daughter of sorrow in the hearing of this humble voice, who will assure us that "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment," will not "work for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory:" and that God is not good unto all, and that his tender mercies are not over all his works?

Much has been said in the christian church, and much has been maintained by the prejudices of the ignorant against the universal goodness of God, and in favor of a partial system of salvation; but after all, the great question is, has God furnished those who limit his favor, with sufficient proof that they are right in so doing? In his sun-shine and in his rain does the *Father of our spirits inform* us, that he has elected a

few only of his rational offspring to be heirs of his grace, and that the remainder are doomed to everlasting wo? No! the blessed rays of the sun which makes our day, and warms the earth, the rain from heaven, which waters our fields and our orchards and our gardens, preach the doctrine of universal impartial goodness; and so do all the elements in the infinite variety of their productions. The water we drink, the air we breathe, the food we receive, the raiment we wear, the strength of our bodies, the abilities of our minds, our health, the sweets of friendship, the beauties our eyes behold, the charms of music, the flavor of fruits, in short every subject of thought agrees in declaring the impartial goodness of God.

The enemies of this doctrine, would persuade us to believe that it tends to licentiousness, and removes all restraint necessary to prevent the grossest immortality. But have they ever attempted to show that the universal promise of grace in the seed of Abraham, ever tended to make that friend of God, who believed it licentious? Will they undertake to show that the united testimony of all God's holy prophets since the world began, who have spoken of the restitution of all things, has made the believers of the faithful word perverse and sinful? Can you, my friends, see any thing licentious in the sun-shine or in the rain, of which all are made to share in rich abundance? Is the vital air licentious because it is free grace to every living being? Are the cooling springs and limpid streams lasivious in their impartial favor? In all these things God preaches every day, and his auditors rejoice in his mercy.

Having noticed the universality of this promised grace of the gospel covenant, it may be proper to inquire something concerning what is promised. "A feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." This is surely a description, of a most sumptuous feast. Here are no indications of poverty and *want.* *This* feast too is made for all people! I cast *my eyes* around, I rejoice, my heart swells with joy.

This feast is made for you all! Can it be possible that this God of universal mercy should have any enemies? Yes, men are enemies to God by wicked works; yet for these very enemies he has made this feast of fat things. But of what does this feast consist? Answer, it is composed of the fruit of the spirit which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." This is the river, "the streams whereof make glad the city of our God."

What is richer, what is sweeter, what is more nourishing than love? Love to God and love to man is life, it is peace, it is joy, it is long-suffering, it is gentleness it is goodness; it believeth all things, it hopeth all things, it endureth all things; it is meekness, it is temperance, it is the fulfilling of the law, it is everlasting righteousness. This is the milk and honey of spiritual Canaan. This is the feast of which we read in the 9th of Proverbs; "Wisdom hath built her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beast; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table; she hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the high places of the city, whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, come eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled, forsake the foolish and live: and go in the way of understanding." By the Prophet Isaiah we are invited to this feast in the following language: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat of that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." And the blessed Jesus, in the great day of the feast, stood and cried, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." By such language as the foregoing, from the prophet and from the Saviour, we are assured that this feast is made for "*all people.*" *If this* were not the case the Holy

Ghost would not use general and universal terms in calling on people to come to it. Should one of our wealthy citizens make a public entertainment, and send his servants into the streets to invite the people in such language as is used in scripture to invite sinners to the gospel feast, every person who heard such invitations would either believe that he was welcome, or that the man who made the feast was a hypocrite. To talk about general calls and special calls in this case would never satisfy common sense.

Our brother, who holds to conditional salvation may be admitted to bring his objection against the final salvation of all men, and say, that the feast is made for all who will come, and the invitation is to whosoever will. Reply: We grant his premises, but disallow his consequences. We will ask him whether he would be concerned for fear his children would starve to death, if he had bread enough to give them? Would any person be concerned for their children or friends, for fear they would starve, when they had enough to eat? It is true there may be difficulties to be removed; there may be a case in which though there be a plenty of provision, the children may not know where it is. In this case the parent would certainly use means to inform them. Again, children may be plagued with disobedient hearts, they may wander from home, they may, from being displeased, refuse to come to the parental table, but hunger will cure all these difficulties.—Let the child that wilfully refuses to eat, be indulged in its own way, how soon will hunger humble its spirit. How came the brethren of Joseph all to prostrate themselves before him? These men who were so determined that the dreams of Joseph should never be fulfilled, who despised the thought of falling on their knees to their brother, were humbled by famine. The stout hearted, haughty prodigal was humbled, brought to himself, and made *willing to* return to his father's house by the force of *hunger.* Was there ever any uncertainty respecting *the reduction* of Joseph's brethren to a state of humility? Was there any uncertainty about the final return

of the prodigal? No, nor is there any uncertainty that "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord."

That law by which all creatures are governed renders it certain that all people will feed on the best provisions they can procure, especially if it cost them nothing.

If Ephraim of old, fed on wind, and followed after the east wind, it was because he knew of nothing better. And if people now are as much deceived as Ephraim was, they may endeavor to feed on every wind of doctrine that blows from the high places of spiritual wickedness; but it is because they know of nothing better. God says, by the mouth of the Prophet Hosea; "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." This situation of mankind seems to invite us to the consideration of another important subject in our text, expressed in the following words; "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations."

This vail or face of covering which has been spread over all nations is the ignorance and unbelief of which St. Paul speaks in Romans 11th, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." And the same Apostle has more on the same subject in his 2d Epistle to the Corinthians; "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; and not as Moses which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: but their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in reading the Old Testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away."

The gospel dispensation and ministry were designed *for the enlightening* and instructing of mankind. *Jesus was a teacher sent* from God; the Apostles

were commanded to teach all nations, and preach the gospel to every creature. In short, the true knowledge of God is the life and salvation which the Saviour brings to the world; it is the feast of fat things which is made in mount Sion for all people. Jesus said in his prayer to the Father: "Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Did every child of Adam now know God and Jesus Christ, they would have eternal life. We are told, that this is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; that is, the knowledge of God is in Christ Jesus. Salvation then consists in knowing God, which makes it evident that the nature of God is salvation. As fast, therefore, as we advance in the knowledge of God we enjoy the rich provisions which are made for all people. The hearer may now see the nature of the general subject. The love, wisdom, knowledge and goodness of God are free for all people and are calculated to bless, with fulness of joy, every creature. In the divine economy man is constituted capable of advancing in wisdom, knowledge, and love, and therefore seems destined in his nature to the enjoyments under consideration.

When "all shall know the Lord," there will be no need of one's teaching another; the vail then will be gone, there will be no unbelief, and of course no hardness of heart. The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

Will the advocate for limited salvation, and the endless misery of mankind pretend, that those who are to be forever miserable are to remain ignorant of the true character of God? Will the time never come when deception will be removed? Have we reason to *believe,* that error will be secured from divine light so as *to remain* in the mind forever? Or will the opposer *say: No,* error will be destroyed, and the deceived will *be brought* to see and know the truth, but then it

will all be too late! The day of his probation will then be ended, and he not saved? This has an awful sound, and such talk has greatly troubled thousands, but enlightened none. Let us ask, how it can be possible that any rational being should know divine truth too late to enjoy it? Is it possible to know God and Jesus Christ and not be filled with divine love? But this subject is erroneously represented, as if we were to receive eternal life as a reward for knowing God in a certain given time, called the time of our probation; after which it would be no advantage to us to know him. This idea does not acknowledge the truth of the words of Jesus; "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

The hearer is now invited to give a moment's attention to another most weighty subject contained in the passage under consideration, and expressed in the following words; "He will swallow up death in victory." Death is of two kinds, moral and natural. Moral death is the effect of sin, natural death is the effect of a mortal constitution. In order to swallow up these two kinds of death, sin must be finished, everlasting righteousness take its place, and mortality must put on immortality. The scriptures are clear on these subjects, and leave no room for doubt. The fore-runner of Jesus said of him; "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." The beloved disciple said; "And we know that he was manifested to take away our sins." Again; "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Again; "For this purpose was the son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Moral death consists in unreconciliation to God and is swallowed up in victory by the ministration of reconciliation, to wit: "that God was in Christ reconciling *the world to himself*, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Reconciliation to God is victory over *moral death. St. Paul* says to the Romans; "Moreover

law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.—For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed; for the end of those things is death. But now, being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The 15th chapter of the 1st epistle of the Corinthians is principally devoted to the support of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead on the hypothesis that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The hearer is earnestly solicited to read this chapter with peculiar attention, by which he will perceive that the Apostle did not believe in a state of sin and misery after the resurrection, but a glorious state of life and immortality The consummation of this transcendent event the inspired author informs us is the fulfilment of our subject. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory."—Lastly, "And the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces: and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." Here the prophet presents us with the most moving scene that ever imagination could invent, or language describe. He represents the Father of our spirits as throwing away forever the rod of correction; and approaching his humble, penitent, weeping children, and with the pitying hand of parental love wiping away the tears his fatherly severity had caused to flow.

To conclude, our subject and doctrine may be improved in the following manner.

As God is recommended to be impartially good to *the whole* human family, ordering and directing all *things for* the advancement of our happiness, he is *worthy of* our unfeigned love and gratitude; and the due

consideration of this weighty truth imposes on us all the great and rational duty of conforming our minds, affections and conduct to this benevolent doctrine. Though the opposers of this grace of universal salvation have so far misunderstood the subject, as to represent it tending to licentiousness, we are fully convinced as that no other doctrine is a safe foundation on which to build a moral character, or by which we can become conformed to the religion of Jesus, which embraces love to our enemies. It seems as vain as it is absurd to attempt to cultivate universal love and good will towards mankind by enforcing on the mind partial and limited views of the goodness of God. But having this divine and glorious foundation firmly fixed in our understandings, let us remember with proper caution, that "the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present world."

As the rich provisions of the gospel of everlasting life are made for all people, as all are most tenderly and cordially invited to partake of the blessed fruit of the tree of life, let us all strive in earnest to understand and know the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us feast on the divine truth revealed in the faithful word. Why should reasonable creatures, blessed with such powers of investigation, and capable of enjoying such intellectual dainties, lie supinely and feed on wind, on vanity, on lies, and roll falsehood and the gall of error and superstition as a sweet morsel under their tongues? Come away from all the partial schemes of the wisdom of this world, leave behind you all the broken cisterns hewn out by man's invention, which can hold no water, and come to the fountain of living waters. Have you endeavoured to satisfy your souls with the polluted bread of a heaven where you must look down and see your fellow creatures in endless torments? Where you must hear the ceaseless groans of fathers, *mothers, wives, children* and other dear relatives? *Have you strove to conform* yourselves to these a*bominations?* O hear the language of our text

and let your hearts rejoice in the God of our salvation. "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees, of fat things, full of marrow, of wines on the lees, well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it."

LECTURE VII.

THE BURNING UP OF THE PROUD AND OF ALL THAT DO WICKEDLY.

MALACHI, iv. 1.

For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

THIS portion of prophetic testimony having been generally used to support the awful, terrific doctrine of future endless misery, and being now brought as an objection to a belief in the divine goodness to all men is the occasion of the request which has called our attention to this subject at this time.

As we have consented to discuss this text in this evening's discourse, a hope is entertained that the audience will feel such an interest in the investigation as will occasion a most devout and religious attention. If the Holy Ghost, by these words, intended to inform us that it is the divine determination not to humble the proud nor reform those who do wickedly, but to execute upon them endless torture, no doubt it is necessary for us so to understand these and other words of divine inspiration; but if these words were designed to indicate the reduction of the proud to humility, and the reformation of those who do wickedly, it is of importance that we so understand them. Let us, therefore, carefully examine the text under consideration to see if its most natural meaning is, that all the proud and all that do wickedly are to be tormented eternally in a fire that shall burn as an oven. If we find that this is the *true meaning* of this passage, we must *admit it as evidence of the* truth of the terrific doctrine *to which it is usually* applied, and as a refutation of the

doctrine of universal salvation by Jesus Christ. Furthermore, if the common use of this text be admitted, we must reasonably suppose, that this doctrine is the doctrine of the holy scriptures generally.

Let us look at the text. "For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." If this language is to be understood according to its most literal sense it means that all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be burnt up as stubble is consumed that is burned in an oven. There will remain of the proud and the wicked neither root nor branch. To use a simile, we will suppose that it is said of a tree, that the fire has consumed it, root and branch; would any reasonable person understand that the tree now exists? No they would not. Now if the tree do not exist, it surely does not continue to burn. The conclusion then is this; if the proud and those who do wickedly are literally burnt up, they will cease to exist, and of course, they will cease to be tormented. It would be just as reasonable to contend, that John Rogers is now burning in the fire that consumed him, as to apply our text to prove the endless torments of the wicked.

We may ask why *stubble* should be used to represent the proud and them who do wickedly? Stubble is extremely combustible, it is consumed and gone almost as soon as it is set on fire. It therefore shows that the proud and them who do wickedly will continue to burn but a short time, and this idea is fully expressed in the conclusion of our text; "it shall leave them neither root nor branch." The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, has said, as recorded in the 37th Psalm; "For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." According to this divine prediction the wicked will not exist but a little while and of course cannot suffer but a little while; for they sure*ly cannot suffer* any longer than they exist. We read

in the 10th of Proverbs as follows, "As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation."

Not only does the text under consideration fully disprove the idea to which it is usually applied, but the several passages already quoted equally disprove it. To their united testimony we may add what candid, unprejudiced reason seems to suggest on the same subject.

It is granted by all who profess to believe in a Supreme Being, that he is a Being of infinite goodness. Now we know that it is not the nature of goodness to harm any creature, but to do good to all. From these plain self-evident facts we infer, that God will never administer any kind of affliction to any of his creatures, which is not designed for their benefit. If a creature be in a state of keen distress, from which there is no hope of recovery, to put an end to this creature's existence is a favor. That very fond and compassionate love, which renders the parent solicitous for the child's recovery from pain and sickness, and impels to every possible exertion which promises the least relief, will, the moment all hope is gone, seek repose in the dissolution of nature.—Were it proposed to a kind parent, whose tender offspring is struggling with the distress of a most painful complaint, that though the child could not be cured, it might be preserved in its present situation to old age, would this be chosen rather than that these pains should subside in the peaceful sleep of death? The evident fact is, that goodness is never willing to prolong pain and distress unless it is seen how this may prove beneficial to the subject. It therefore belongs to those who contend for the doctrine of endless punishment, to cast in their minds whether they can justify themselves in giving to the Father of our spirits a character, which for cruelty infinitely exceeds that of the most unfeeling tyrant which has ever oppressed mankind.

The faithful word of divine inspiration, as recorded in the 57th chapter of Isaiah informs us that God "will not contend forever, neither will he be always wroth: for the *spirit should* fail before him, and the souls

which he has made." And by the same divine authority we have it recorded in the 3d chapter of the Lamentations, that the "Lord will not cast off forever: but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

While these last quoted passages prove, beyond all contradiction, that God will not punish his creatures with an endless punishment, they as fully show that the design of punishment is not to annihilate the soul that God has made. The reason which God renders in the passage quoted from Isaiah, why he will not contend forever nor be always wroth is because the spirit would fail before him, and the soul which he has made.

We may now consider the following important question. (viz.) How is it possible that all the proud yea, and all that do wickedly should be burnt up root and branch, and yet be saved in the Lord Jesus with an everlasting salvation? And furthermore, how can the wicked be saved by the grace of God, if the words spoken by David be true, where he says, as before quoted; "For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be?" If the wicked are not allowed to exist, how can they be saved?

Reply: Here we think is a proper place to bring in the scripture doctrine of regeneration or new birth, not with a design to treat it by way of explaining it, but by application. Jesus said to the Jews; "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do."—Now suppose any of these Jews were converted by the spirit of truth after our Saviour's ascension to glory, they thereby became the children of God. If so, they were no longer the children of the devil. If any of the children of the devil can by regenerating grace, become the children of God, then by the same grace all the children of the devil may become the children of God. Suppose this should ever be accomplished would not the predictions of the Prophets be fulfilled? Where are the wicked? There *are none*—Where is his place? As there are none

wicked so there is no place for the wicked. Where is the stubble? the fire has passed over it—there is no stubble.—Look carefully, see if the root be not left—the root is all consumed.—Are the branches spared? There is neither root nor branch left.

Now turn your eyes and behold the innumerable multitude of all nations on mount Zion. From whence came they? These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. They have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

The hearers will now ask if we are to explain the text under consideration in this way? Is it in reality a fact that this text which has been so often quoted to terrify us with the apprehensions of never ending burnings, does, in reality, mean the purification of all who do wickedly, and the total destruction of wickedness?

Reply: As we have already proved, that the text can neither be applied to the endless duration of punishment, nor yet to the annihilation of the proud and them that do wickedly, we may now proceed to inquire for its true application, by bringing it into connexion with other passages in particular where similar language is used, and with those generally which express the design and will of God concerning sinners. By a careful attention to this method, we shall be likely to avoid any application that would be in opposition to the revealed testimony.

"For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven." What day is this? A little before in the preceding chapter, the Prophet uses the following words; "Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold he shall come saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? *for he* is like a refiner's fire, and *like fuller's soap. And he* shall set as a refiner and

purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."

The messenger here promised, who should prepare the way before the Lord, we find in John the baptist, accordingly as we read Luke 1st, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." Compare also, Isaiah 40th, 3d, with Luke 3d 4th. By bringing these scriptures together we learn, that the day spoken of in this 3d chapter of Malachi was the time of the coming of Christ who is called the messenger of the covenant, who should be as a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap. There is no doubt then but this scripture was a prophecy of the gospel day, and of its refining and purifying mankind.

We shall in the next place prove that the day spoken of in our text is the same day of which mention is made in the preceding chapter, which we have shown to be the gospel day. Following our text the Prophet goes on to describe what shall take place on this day that shall burn as an oven, &c. but before he closes the subject he says; "Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." The hearer will observe that he who is called Elijah in the Old Testament is called Elias in the New. Speaking of John, Jesus says, as recorded Matt. 11; "For this is he of whom it is written, behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.—And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come." Thus as evidently as we can prove any thing from the scriptures, we prove that the day that is mentioned five or six times in these two chapters is the gospel day.

The Prophet Isaiah speaks of this burning day in his 9th chapter as follows; "For every battle of the warrior *is with* confused noise, and garments rolled in *blood, but* this shall be with burning and full of fire.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."

As it is granted by all that this prophecy alludes to Christ and to the peace which he has made by the blood of his cross, it may be proper to ask whether it be not reasonable to conclude that this burning is the same as mentioned in our text, and this fuel of fire the same as stubble in our text? If what is so reasonable be allowed, it seems perfectly safe to allow, that the true meaning of the passage under discussion, is the purifying of the wicked "by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning."

The fire which distinguishes the day and work of the great sanctifier of sinners is described by John the forerunner of Jesus, in Matt. 3, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; whose fan is in his hands, and he will thoroughly purge his floor and gather his wheat into his garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Thus the true spiritual baptism of Jesus is with the Holy Ghost and with fire; and with the fire with which he baptizes, he burns up the chaff.

In 1st Corinthians, 3d. St. Paul has a passage which is remarkably similar to the one we are investigating; it reads thus; "Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." In this passage wicked works are called stubble; these works *are to be burnt up, and* the wicked saved; yet so as

by fire. Now if we allow scripture to explain scripture, we may be satisfied of the true meaning of our text. "All the proud, and all them that do wickedly" must pass the fire of the day of the Lord. In the character of the proud and the wicked they must be destroyed root and branch, and be translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

We may now proceed to show, that this sense of the passage under consideration is agreeable to the scripture testimony generally in respect to God's will and revealed purpose concerning sinners.

In St. Paul's 1st epistle to Timothy he exhorts him to pray and give thanks for all men, and as a reason for so doing, he says; "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." In his epistle to the Ephesians, the same author says; "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him." According to these passages it is the will of God that all men should be saved, should be gathered together in Christ. And Jesus himself says; "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." If God will the salvation of all men, and Jesus came to do his Father's will it is evident that he came to save all men. Again the Saviour says; "For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." The forerunner of Jesus says of him; "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." When the religious people of the Jews found fault with Christ because he was a friend to publicans and sinners, he informed them that he came to call sinners to repentance, and to seek and to save that which was lost. In a word, the ministry of the *gospel is* a ministry of reconciliation, and testifies "that

God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

Not only does the testimony of Jesus, which we have quoted, prove that sinners are the objects of God's love and the subjects of gospel salvation, but St. Paul reasons to the same point; in his epistle to the Romans he says: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." To the Ephesians he says; "But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Nothing is more obvious than that it was the gracious design of the coming of Christ, and the introduction of the gospel dispensation, to save sinners from their sins, purify them by the spirit of grace, and reconcile them to God. But how entirely repugnant to all this is the opinion to which our text is usually applied. In room of humbling the proud, and bringing sinners to repentance, it is believed that God will exercise unmerciful wrath on his erring offspring to all eternity. Though the text carries not the least intimation of any such thing in it, yet so fixed is this notion, by the force of tradition that it seems almost as hard to dissuade people from it, as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

That we may understand the ways of God with the proud and them who do wickedly, it may be proper to notice some instances which are recorded for our instruction.—That of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon will not be considered unappropriate. Great was the pride of this prince and great was his wickedness. Notwithstanding God had warned him in a dream which Daniel the Prophet expounded to him, and notwithstanding the Prophet most affectionately counselled him to break off his sins by righteousness, and his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor! yet such was the pride of his wicked heart, that it seems he gave no heed to these kind and seasonable monitions, "but at the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of *the kingdom of Babylon.* The king spoke, and said

is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth there fell a voice from heaven saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee; and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." All this God accomplished on this proud monarch, until his body was wet with the dew of heaven, his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers, and his nails like birds claws." This humbled his heart, returned to him his understanding, raised his eyes to heaven, and this is his confession; "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar praise, and extol, and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." Was every child of Adam a Nebuchadnezzar, and every heart as proud as his, how easy would it be for infinite wisdom, power, and goodness to humble them all to a due sense of their dependence on God. Such as was the result of God's dealings with this haughty prince, we may reasonably suppose will be the result of his chastising providence on "all the proud and all them that do wickedly" for "those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

Though the means which our heavenly Father may use with his disobedient offspring may vary, we have no reason to believe that his designs are partial, we have no evidence to support the notion that he will humble some and grant them mercy, but punish others eternally.

Another particular instance of God's dealings with one who did extremely wickedly is the case of David king of Israel. The crimes which this monarch committed being pointed out to him in the faintest simile which their nature would admit, he adjudged the criminal to death—But what were the dealings of God *toward him?* He was visited with such awful calamities

in his family as were as much worse than death, as his crimes were more heinous than the one represented to him by the prophet Nathan, for which he said, the man that hath done this shall surely die. But was David finally rejected from the favor of God?—No, for he sang "of mercy and of judgment," and praised God whom he acknowledged to be his salvation.

It surely will not be contended, that the divine Being pays any peculiar respect to kings, by dealing with their crimes in a more lenient manner, than he does with the crimes of others. It should be allowed that the higher a man's station is in society the greater his criminality if he use his power contrary to his duty.

If then, the king of Israel could be punished here in this life, according to the offence which he had committed, and if he were duly humbled and received into favor, have the wicked now any reason to expect to escape the righteous judgments of God? And have the religious any reason to say, that God will never humble the wicked and receive them all to mercy? Was every child of Adam a murderous David, and had sins as great as his, stained every soul: Yet would every humble, penitent believer in Jesus say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

It is allowed, if there be some more stiff-necked than others, and harder to be brought into humiliation, we may not yet have mentioned them; but we shall find them in the case of the pharisee. He, who by the mighty power of grace was converted from a spiritually proud, and persecuting pharisee, to a humble, meek disciple of Jesus, whom he had persecuted, is such a trophy of divine mercy, we now hold him up before you all as an example of God's dealings with all the proud and all them which do wickedly." What does St. Paul say of himself? "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me *first Jesus Christ might* shew forth all long-suffering

for a pattern for them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." Was every son and daughter of human nature a persecuting Saul, yet there would be hope that they might all be brought to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?—But when it pleased him who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

Is it necessary to name a fourth particular instance, and shall it be selected from among the erring daughters of Eve? Consider then the case of Mary Magdalene out of whom the bruiser of the serpent's head cast seven devils. Was every man, woman and child in the world as possessed as was this woman, who was a sinner, yet might the grace of the Redeemer bring them all to wash his feet with the tears of penitence, and annoint him with the precious ointment of much love and humble gratitude.

A hope is entertained that the hearer will not be disposed to say, if all this be true we may indulge in every sin and abomination. Of the whole seven that were cast out, this argument is the worst. This is ingratitude the basest of all the serpent tribe.

Did the king of Babylon find by experience that because God was able to abase those who walk in pride, it was therefore as well to walk in pride as to be humble? Did David find by experience, that sin against God and his fellow creatures was attended with no evil? Must sin be rolled as a sweet morsel under the tongue? Must a guilty conscience be esteemed as a friend that sticketh closer than a brother? Our argument to prove the doctrine of the impartial goodness of God towards all men, does in no sense deny his divine severity toward the wicked.

By understanding our text in the way we have explained it, we discover its harmony with other passages where similar language is used; we also see its agreement with the united testimony of scripture respecting the divine will and purpose concerning the reconciliation and salvation of sinners.

But in the common way of understanding this pas-

sage, it is made to contradict the whole scheme of the gospel, and to represent every subject of divine grace as an object of never ending wrath.—Such absurdities are constantly reiterated from our pulpits, and in almost all sermons the glaring contradiction is urged on the hearers, that sinners, are the objects of divine love, and eternal vengeance; that Jesus came into our world for the express purpose of saving sinners, and that sinners must be endlessly miserable. There can be no wonder that the common people are getting to be weary of such preaching, nor is there any just reason of complaint if attempts are making to effect a reformation.

Not only is it our duty to endeavor to explain particular passages in a way to bring them into the general theme of the scriptures, but due attention should be paid to understand the scriptures in a way to agree with the disposition and conduct which the religion of Jesus Christ requires. Suppose then, that we adopt the common opinion of our text, and contend that the Holy Ghost moved the Prophet to set forth the endless misery of "all the proud and all them that do wickedly," in the language of this passage, will it then be easy to reconcile this with the disposition which our religion requires us to exercise toward our enemies, and with our duty to mankind? Can we see the propriety of loving those who we believe are the objects of the unmerciful vengeance of our Creator of praying for those who we believe are predestinated to endless suffering?

But if we understand our text and the scriptures in general to teach the doctrine of reconciliation, and to support the joy inspiring belief that he, who gave himself a ransom for all men, will finally see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; that he who sets a refiner and purifier of silver, will eventually purify the wicked from all sin, humble the proud, and give all to know the Lord, whom to know is life eternal, it seems that the christian duty of loving all men, doing good to all men, and praying for all men is perfectly consistent *with such a belief.*

There is another particular rule according to which particular passages, and indeed the scriptures in general should be explained; that is, the knowledge of the truth gives joy to the heart. St. Paul informs us, that "charity rejoiceth in the truth." It is then an evidence that we rightly understand the scripture, if the love of God shed abroad in the heart can rejoice in the sentiment. This christian audience is now affectionately called on to try the sentiment usually supported by the text under consideration, by the rule last suggested. If you can truly say that you sincerely love all mankind, that you entertain that charity for all which suffereth long and is kind, can you say that you rejoice in the belief, that millions of your fellow creatures are predestinated to endless sufferings? This you all acknowledge is impossible. How then can God, who is love itself, ordain a dispensation of severity, the design of which is to perpetuate the sufferings of his own offspring as long as he shall exist?

My bretheren, "there is peace in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost." But is there any peace or joy in believing in this doctrine of never-ending misery? There surely is not. But if we really believe in the divine testimony, which plainly shows that it is the plan of God, manifested in Christ Jesus, to finish sin and to make an end of transgressions, to take away our sins, to reconcile the world to himself; and that all his judgments and his mercies are wisely directed to effect this blessed object, we can "rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." But while we rejoice in the consoling belief, that all the judgments of God will finally eventuate in the reduction of "all the proud and all them that do wickedly" to obedience, let us be wise for ourselves, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, by doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly before God.

LECTURE VIII.

THE STORY OF JOSEPH, AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE HISTORY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

DEUTERONOMY, xxxiii, 16, 17.

Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

THE events which the divine historian has recorded, respecting Joseph the son of the patriarch Jacob, form a subject remarkably instructing to every attentive observer.

The treatment he received from his brethren was of such a peculiar cast, that Moses the prophet of the Lord, more than four hundred years afterward, in the blessing pronounced on his family, makes the honorable mention of his being separated from his brethren which we find in our text.

This memorable separation, the causes which occasioned it, the circumstances which attended it; the wisdom and goodness of God manifested by it and the rich blessings which finally came on him in consequence of his having been separated from his brethren, will form matter for the first general section of the present discourse.

Moved with envy, Joseph's brethren sold him to the Ishmaelites, who were going from Gilead with spies into Egypt, where Joseph was again sold for a bond slave. The causes which seemed to occasion this deadly envy were the following. Joseph was the son of his fathers old age, and until about the time of his being sold, *the only child* of the beloved Rachael. It *seems rather difficult to* determine whether Benjamin

was born, or not at this time. The faithful historian informs us, that "Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age." By this it would rather seem that Benjamin was not born, for he was more especially the son of Jacob's old age than Joseph. But the scripture chronology supposes that Benjamin was born, and of course, that Rachael died in the one thousand seven hundred and twenty ninth year before Christ, and that Joseph was sold the same year. Such is the nature of partiality, it seldom avoids being seen. It was so visible in Jacob's conduct, that it created an unhappy jealousy in the minds of the rest of the family, so that they "hated Joseph, and could not speak peaceably unto him."

Nor was this parental partiality the only occasion of that cruel envy which moved Joseph's brethren against him; for we are informed that heaven inspired him with two remarkable dreams, which evidently suggested the idea of his future superiority over them, and their bowing down to him as a superior. An envious mind is always in the dark. Had these brethren been wise, they would have seen no occasion to be angry at their brother. If their father was imprudent enough to indulge an improper partiality in favor of the son of his old age, it was far from right to hate the son for the fault of the father. If they supposed the dreams which their brother told were not divinely dictated, but were either the fruits of vain imaginations, or only contrived up in order to deceive, they might have saved themselves any trouble by being content to wait with patience until time should show the folly of all such vain attempts or imaginations.—But their hearts were not right; they therefore took the wrong way, the broad road that leads to destruction.

Full of burning, envy and indignation these brethren left the family circle, the sacred tent of venerable Israel, in the vale of Hebron, and went to feed their father's flock at Shechem.

Notwithstanding Jacob felt a partiality for Joseph, he was by no means unmindful of his other children. *He felt a solicitous concern for the welfare of his ab-*

sent sons, and proposed to Joseph that he should go to Shechem to inquire for his brethren's health and prosperity. The tender unsuspicious youth was as ready to obey as the father was to command. Without the least hesitation or suspicion he sat off on this errand of love. Little did the venerable patriarch think what treatment awaited the darling of his heart; little did he then think of the sorrows which were to overwhelm his soul. Little did the tender child anticipate the cruel sufferings which were to reward his filial obedience and fraternal affection. Little did he think, when he parted with his father in the lovely vale of Hebron, that he should see him no more till he should embrace him in a strange land, where he should be a father to his father, and the lord and support of his brethren.

When he came to Shechem he was informed that his brethren had removed to Dothan where he immediately repaired and found them. But here in room of meeting the friendly eye and the affectionate smile, and being kindly welcomed to peaceful tents of humble shepherds, he beholds the eye of anger kindled with envy, the clouded brow of wrath foreboding an awful storm, the dread image of hate drawn in each visage. In vain does he turn his innocent eye from one to another in search of a kind protector. He is violently seized, stripped of his coat of many colors and cast into a pit that was in the wilderness. This done these unnatural brethren sat down to eat bread.

Here we may observe the wisdom and goodness of God in making use of one sinful passion to control another so as to cause the wrath of man to praise him, and to restrain the remainder. Divine providence so ordered, that at this hour the travelling merchants from Gilead arrived at this place, which suggested the idea of selling Joseph. These murderous brethren had formed the determination, in the first place, to take his life outright; but Reuben wishing to deliver him out of their hands proposed to cast him into the pit, where their determination was to let him die. But *now avarice gains so much* on anger, as by promising

to rid them forever of their fear of becoming at all dependent on Joseph, that they consent to sell him for twenty pieces of silver. To attempt to describe the feelings of Joseph on this trying occasion would be in vain. Poor solitary youth, not an earthly friend in the wide world that could extend to him the arm of deliverance, or even speak one consoling word. "Separated from his brethren he now moves along with his unfeeling masters, but with what reluctant steps. No doubt he casts a lingering eye of compassion on his persecutors, and how hard was the thought that he should see them no more. With what painful reflections did his thoughts return to the parental tent in the lovely vale of Hebron, how did his bosom swell with grief when the pangs of everlasting adieu to the sacred circle of home, country and liberty pierced his tortured soul? But with his brethren were very different reflections. They had fortunately sold their fears for twenty pieces of silver. As the object of their envy receded from their sight, they sought repose in a refuge of lies and deceit. They now felt secure from the humiliating thought of ever bowing down to their brother or of seeing their father's fondness exercised over the child of his old age. They now rend the coat of many colors, dip it in blood and carry it to their father. He knows the garment, and exclaims; "it is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces." He mourns the untimely death of his son, determined to refuse all comfort, and to go down to the grave to his son mourning.

Let us now notice the remarkable instances of the wisdom and goodness of God manifested in all this sinful, disasterous conduct of the cruel sons of Israel, and in the partiality of the over fond father.

According to rational calculation, we may suppose, that if the father of this family had preserved an impartial regard for his children, it would have been the means of lengthening its tranquility. If Joseph had *not dreamed* and told the dreams which served to kin*dle the fire* of envy in his brethren's hearts, it seems

reasonable to suppose that they might all have lived harmoniously and in peace. But how evident it is that God overruled all these circumstances and events for the good of all concerned. How evident it is that the divine wisdom had the directing of all these affairs. Joseph is now safe in Egypt the country of his future glory, excellency and usefulness, but a bond slave, a menial servant. Who could believe that this degraded condition lay on his road to fame? But now consider him accused by his mistress of an infamous crime, consider him cast into prison. Here again the criminality and deceit of his accuser is all controled by heaven for the honor of God, the good of millions, the exaltation of the innocent sufferer and the celebration of ages.

Into the same prison where Joseph was bound, the king cast his chief butler and chief baker, whose dreams Joseph interpreted agreeably to the final verdict of his majesty. But the chief butler, contrary to the request of injured Joseph, was so elated with being again restored to favor and office, that he forgot the young prisoner who for two full years more lay in the prison, until the dreams of Pharaoh brought him to the butler's recollection. It was about fourteen years from the time Joseph left the sweet and tranquil habitation of his beloved father to the time he was brought out of prison in Egypt, to stand before his majesty the king, to interpret those remarkable dreams by which he was warned of seven years of great plenty, which should be followed with seven more of famine. The wisdom which appeared in this long afflicted Hebrew brought him into favor with Pharaoh, who appointed him to be over his own house and to rule his people according to his will.

During the seven years of plenty Joseph used such prudence and economy as to lay up vast quanties of corn in store against the long and severe famine which he foresaw would visit the land.

When the dearth came it was not confined to Egypt but extended over all the face of the earth, so that all countries were *dependent* on Egypt for bread. The

famine was sore in the land of Canaan, and pale hunger began to threaten the extensive household of Jacob and his sons. Jacob therefore said to his sons; "Why do you look one upon another? I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live and not die." They came into Egypt and into the presence of Joseph; but he was so altered in the space of about twenty one years, or perhaps more, and as they had no thought of seeing him at all, and especially no expectation of finding him the lord of all the land of Egypt, they did not know him. When they came before him, "they bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth." Joseph knew his brethren; they were men who had attained to years before he was separated from them, and had not altered so much but he knew them. He now saw his first dream fulfilled. All his brethren who were envious towards him, he now sees on their faces before him. He treated them roughly, not because revenge was in his heart, but to try them. He retained Simeon until the rest should return to the relief of their families, and bring Benjamin down to Egypt. They then conversed among themselves, in the Hebrew tongue, which they supposed Joseph did not understand, of their sin against their brother, and were satisfied that they were visited with evil for their iniquity. Joseph understood all they said, and was greatly moved with compassion. After many trials and sore difficulties, at the second time, when all the sons of Israel were together, and Joseph had the pleasure of seeing his brother Benjamin, perhaps for the first time, he made himself known to them. He could no longer contain himself; he wept aloud and said unto his brethren, "I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, come near to me I pray you: and they came near. And he said I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me

before you to preserve life.——And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him."

As the hearer is familiar with the account of this most interesting subject, we may not be further particular. It is recollected that the whole family came down to Egypt and were nursed by Joseph and supported by his bounty. Now was his second dream accomplished.

Let us notice in this place, the words of Joseph before recited; "God did send me before you to preserve life." Is it not evident, my brethren, that the infinitely wise, powerful, and good God made use of the partial fondness of Jacob as a means to move Joseph's brethren against him? Is it not evident that the same divine Being inspired Joseph with the two dreams which represented his brethren's submission to him, and also that of their father and mother, for the purpose of bringing about the event of Joseph's being sold into Egypt? Is it not clear beyond all doubt, that all the wickedness, envy, hard heartedness, and deceit of which the ten brethren were guilty was controlled by the wisdom and goodness of God in a manner to promote the highest honor of the divine name, and the best interest of those most perverse and wicked men? And must it not be gratefully acknowledged, that all the afflictions which came on Jacob and his family, and the afflictions of Joseph were designed by our heavenly Father, for the good of all these sufferers? It seems necessary to call the attention of the hearer to the consideration of the following questions: Does the argument which we here maintain give to the divine Being a good character? Is it safe to have so much confidence in God as to believe, that he manages all the concerns of men in a way to promote their best interest? Is God so transcendantly kind as to turn our own faults to our advantage? Or will you say, that this doctrine is not only too good to be true, *but of dangerous tendency*, as it lays no restraint on

men, but promises them good for their evil? Reply: Is this doctrine any better than was the conduct of God towards these envious brethren who sold Joseph? And did not these brethren experience a most just and ample retribution for their sins, before they entered into the enjoyment of the divine favor which was brought about by means of their folly? Is not this doctrine exactly what the gospel holds up and requires? Are we not forbidden to render evil for evil? And are we not commanded to render good for evil? "Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good." The blessing that came on Joseph seems to have been, in all respects, what his sufferings seemed to deserve, as ample as his love, and as extensive as his reasonable desires. To have it in his power to reward his brethren with all the favor which their necessities required for all the evil he had received at their hands, to make every necessary provision for his aged father and the whole of his numerous family, from which he had been so long separated, and of supplying many countries with bread during a famine which must have swept off thousands of innocent children with vast multitudes of others, had it not been for the treasures which were laid up by his wisdom and liberally dispensed by his goodness, seems to have been as large and as rich a blessing as could be desired.

To show, by the language of our text, that Moses had a meaning in view, beyond what respected the literality of the subject, and to apply our text to Jesus, who was separated from his brethren, forms the second general section of this discourse.

"His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them shall he push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh."

The firstling of cattle is similar to the first born *among men*. The first born of a family possessed, by *birth right*, a privilege over the younger, as in the case *of Esau and Jacob*. The first born seemed to have *a power of ruling*, and of having the younger branches

of the family in subjection. The first born was also considered holy unto God, as were the first fruits of the field; and the holiness of the first born, and of the first fruits was the holiness of all which were represented by them. This part of the text, which relates to the firstling of the bullock, may very fitly be applied to Joseph as well as Jesus, who is styled the "first born among many brethren, the first born from the dead, and the first born of every creature."

Joseph seems to have obtained the birth right of the first born by a divine arrangement, whereby he became the governor and ruler of his numerous family, though it is true Joseph was literally the first born of the beloved Rachel. His glory answered to his birth right, for we see him the ruler and kind father of his brethren.

But why should Moses say; "his horns are as the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh?" By horns, no doubt power was intended. But how shall the power of Joseph push the people together to the ends of the earth? And how is it that all people thus united are the ten thousands, and thousands, of the two sons of Joseph?

This language and these sentiments are supposed to apply to Jesus in the following manner. As the horns of unicorns are the most powerful among beasts, they are used to represent the power of the Saviour. And as it is said, "with them shall he push the people together to the ends of the earth," it means the same as was expressed by Jacob concerning the Shiloh unto whom the gathering of the people should be; and the same as expressed by Jesus himself, when he said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me." The same is expressed by St. Paul to the Ephesians as follows; "Having made known unto us the majesty of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are *in heaven, and which* are on earth; even in him."

Jews and Gentiles thus gathered into Jesus are said to be the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh. The two sons of Joseph are here used to represent the two families, Jews and Gentiles, which in their fullness, are the children of the "everlasting Father and Prince of peace."

When Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, being blind, Joseph was careful to present Manasseh, the first born, to Jacob's right hand and Ephraim, the younger, to his left, that the first born might receive the appropriate blessing which belonged to his birth right; but Jacob wittingly crossed his hands and laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim and his left on the head of Manasseh. At this, Joseph endeavored to remove his father's hands, and informed him that his left hand was on the head of the first born; to which he replied; "I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations." Thus Moses in our text, when expressing, the multitudes of Gentiles and Jews, in Christ Jesus, says: "They are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." The Jews were first reckoned the children of God, and Israel is called God's first born; but the first are last and the last first. The Gentiles take the lead in the gospel dispensation, for not until the fullness of the Gentiles is come in will the deliverer come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

In considering Joseph and the things concerning him as applicable to Jesus and his ministry we find an extensive field opened before us, a field fruitful as a garden, in all the most beautiful flowers of divine representations, and in the fruits of grace.

The visions of the holy prophets, in which they saw the extensive empire of the Saviour of the world, the subjection of all the nations of the earth to his divine and glorious government, seem to be represented by the dreams of Joseph, which served to kindle his brethren's *hearts* with envy. The declaration from heaven, *which designated* Jesus as the beloved Son of God in

whom the Father is well pleased, seems to be represented by Jacob's love for Joseph,—How angry it made the scribes, the pharisees, the priests and the doctors of the law, that Jesus should pretend to be the Son of God. A man by no means of their standing; why should he pretend to be the king of israel? they were as determined not to have this man to rule over them as Joseph's brethren were that he should not rule over them. As Joseph was separated from his brethren, so was Jesus separated from his; as Joseph was sold for money, so was Jesus; as Joseph was the gracious saviour of the whole family of promise, so is Jesus the Saviour of the whole family "of heaven and earth."

My brethren, look, see the future saviour of the family of Israel, leaving his brethren in Dothan to go down to Egypt a slave, to see them no more until he sees them as his humble subjects, and is acknowledged their lord and protector; then look again and see the blessed Jesus, bearing his cross, going bound to Calvary, separated from his brethren and from all the living, to see them not again until in a glorious resurrection state, he appears "the Lord from heaven."

Let us here talk freely on the grace and plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, as represented by the temporal salvation wrought by Joseph. Joseph was appointed by heaven to be the saviour of all his father's house. He was in fact the saviour of his brethren before they knew him in Egypt. He had treasured up a supply of bread during the seven years of plenty for thousands who were not then born. He was the saviour of vast multitudes, by the merciful appointment of heaven, who were strangers to him, and who knew him not. All the time before his brethren came to Egypt, Joseph was the appointed saviour of them and of their little ones. It was just as certain that they would all partake of the rich bounties of Joseph, even before the famine commenced as it was after they were all removed into the land of Goshen.

Now what reasonable objection can there be to the *sentiment, that the* grace of God, and the scheme of

man's spiritual salvation "is ordered in all things," and rendered as sure as the temporal salvation of the house of Israel was in the scheme which we have noticed?

Joseph's brethren did not believe that they, their wives and their little ones were all to be fed from the bounty of him whom they had so cruelly treated and sold into Egypt. But what power had their ignorance and unbelief to frustrate the divine plan in which their welfare was secured? It is true, they could not enjoy a confidence in their brother until they knew him and were assured of his forgiveness; but he was as truly their brother and friend during their ignorance and unbelief as he was after he had made himself known to them. Is it not equally true, that Jesus is the sinner's friend and Saviour as truly during the season of ignorance and unbelief as he is after faith is given?

The name of Joseph in Egypt was synonymous with bread, it was synonymous with life; and in no other name was there any confidence. All power in Egypt was committed into the hands of Joseph, there was no other name given whereby the life of the people could be saved. Is not all this true in spirit respecting the name of Jesus, is it not synonymous with Saviour? Is not this the bread of God which came down from heaven, and gave life to the world?

In his wise and gracious appointment, the God of heaven gave life to millions in Joseph before they were born; "and this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." This life was the life of the world from the beginning. This was our life before we came into this world, and the unborn ages to come are equally entitled to all its blessings.

The envy, the hatred, the deadly enmity of Joseph's brethren towards him, could do no more than was necessary to promote his glory and advance him in the way of the divine appointment. So all the cruel envy, hatred and persecution practised on the blessed Jesus, by his enemies, only advanced him towards that *glory that during* eternal ages will continue to brighten

and beautify the rational creation of God. As we may notice this subject in part in our next lecture, which will be on the subject of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, we may be brief.

How tender are the words of Joseph to those who had hated him without a cause: "Come near to me I pray you." This is the language of the blessed Jesus in the Gospel of his grace. He speaks to every sinner, saying, "come near to me I pray you." The apostle says "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God; for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

As we have seen that the blessing which came upon the head of Joseph, was in all respects, as large and rich as could be desired, may we not believe with confidence, that the Redeemer will as fully "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied?" If in room of that most interesting account of the humble submission of all Joseph's enemies to him, we were informed that three only were ever brought to repentance, and to be humble before him, and also to receive of his bounty, could we consider his reward to be equal to what the present account makes it? Would it be possible, in this case to see how his dreams were fulfilled? His sheaf stood upright, and all his brethren's sheaves made obeisance to it. The sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance unto him. With less than the submission of all could these heaven-inspired dreams have fully come to pass? With all this was he blessed, and blessed in the sweet enjoyment of a forgiving spirit, and in the victory that spirit gained over the affections of his brethren. Moreover, he was bountifully blessed in his liberal bestowments on his dependant brethren.—They were all blessed in him, but he was the most blessed of all: for "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Thus we believe, that with less than the reconciliation of all men to Jesus, the faithful word of all God's holy prophets since the world began, who have spoken of the restitution *of all things, can never* be fulfilled. Nor can Jesus

see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied with less than the humble submission to his laws, of all who have ever been his enemies. We believe, and believing we rejoice, that the kind Redeemer shall finally be blessed with the full enjoyment of forgiving the iniquities of all his enemies, of feeding them at his own table, with the bread of everlasting life. All will be blessed in him; "all nations shall call him blessed;" but he shall be the most blessed of all, as it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

Blessed were the people that heard the joyful tidings, that there was corn in Egypt. How did the husband's heart leap for joy, that the companion of his bosom should not "perish with hunger!" How unspeakably happy were parents made when assured that their children could be supplied with bread! More blessed still are the "people who know the joyful sound," of the gospel of Jesus, and walk in the light of the Lord. Parents look, behold the shepherd of Israel taking your little children in his arms, and saying "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Said the risen Saviour "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Yes, my friends, you are all welcome to the bread of life; and

"Christ hath sent me to invite you,
"To a rich and costly feast.
"Let not shame nor pride prevent you,
"Come, the rich provision taste."

LECTURE IX

THE BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

MATTHEW, xii. 31, 32.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

Our Saviour spake the words of our text in his reply to the Pharisees, who said of him, "this fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils."

The circumstance which led the Pharisees to speak as we have just noticed was the following. There was brought unto Jesus one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, is not this the son of David? That is, is not this man who cast out devils and works so many miracles the Messiah or Christ of whom the law and the prophets have spoken? As the Pharisees were bitterly opposed to Jesus, this exclamation from the people gave them great uneasiness, for as much as the people were in favor of Jesus, so much they must be in opposition to the Pharisees. In order, therefore, to prevent the people from believing in Jesus, the Pharisees said that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

It seems that the miracles of Jesus were so evident, so open, so undisguised, that his keenest eyed enemies found no chance of success with the people by denying *the facts of the miracles*; they must, therefore, de-

ceive the people by some other means. In the case of the miracle wrought on the man that was born blind, they seemed to doubt the fact of his having been born blind; but having called his parents and received their testimony, they were compelled to believe the fact; but they said to the man to whom sight had been given, "give God the praise, we know that this man is a sinner." It was contended, that as this miracle was performed on the sabbath day, he who wrought it could not be of God. If the Pharisees could persuade the people that Jesus was a sinner, notwithstanding all the miracles which he did, they were sure that they would not believe that he was the Messiah promised. But it seems that the people had discernment enough to raise the question, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" This question must receive some sort of an answer; and almost any thing would do that superstition would countenance, for the common people supposed that these Pharisees and learned doctors of the law, being godly people and of deep discernment must know. When, therefore, their wisdom suggested that the miracles of Jesus were effected by the agency of the prince of the devils, it was by no means difficult for the people to give credit to the opinion, for they were already fixed in the superstitious notions of devils.

The declaration, that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, was a declaration directly against the spirit and power by which the miracle was effected. In reply to this the Saviour reasoned in his usual, natural, plain and energetic manner, as follows: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom *of God is* come unto you. Or else, how can one enter *into a strong* man's house, and spoil his goods, except

he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." Then follow the words of our text, which, when considered in the connexion in which they are found, plainly indicate that the Pharisees, who said that Jesus cast out devils, by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, did, in so saying, speak blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

We shall now proceed to inquire why this sin or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, by which the miracles of Jesus were wrought could not as easily be forgiven as any other sin or blasphemy. It is generally contended that this sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven because it is so much more heinous than all other sins; but because this is the general opinion it is no proper evidence of its being true. Has it ever been proved that this blasphemy is more heinous than other sins! The speaker feels solicitous that the hearer may be disposed, on this subject, to admit of nothing without proof. We are not only at liberty to reject all ideas which have been established by tradition without proper evidence, but it is our religious duty so to do. Let it then be proved that this sin against the Holy Ghost could not be forgiven the Pharisees as easily as any other sin that they committed, because this sin was more heinous than any other, and then we will believe it; but not before. But it is contended that this sin is certainly greater than any other, because it is committed against greater light. Here again we call for proof. Are we informed in the scripture, that this sin is committed against greater light than any other? No, we have no such information. It is granted, that learned divines, so called, have made very nice calculations respecting the degrees of divine light and knowledge which were required in order to enable a person to commit this sin; but then we must be just enough to these pious doctors to allow them the whole of the credit due to such profound researches, for they alone are entitled to it; they have had no help from divine revelation. *On the other hand* it is our duty to re-

ceive nothing which they have said on this subject as the least evidence in the case. Let us look at the subject candidly. The Pharisees spake against Jesus, and said, "we know that this man is a sinner." —Again, they spake against the spirit by which he wrought miracles, and said: "this fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." Now have we any evidence to believe that these Pharisees had any more light or divine knowledge when they spake the latter sentence, than when they spake the former? No, we have no such intimation. Why then, you will ask, might not this sin be forgiven as easily or as soon as other sins? We still continue to reply negatively and say, not because this sin is greater or more heinous than other sins; we have a right to say, because the divine word gives no authority to the contrary. Furthermore, if the divine forgiveness flow from the infinite fulness of grace in God, the supposition that some sins are so small that they can be forgiven, but that others are so great that they cannot be forgiven, is a flagrant violation of reason. If some sins are small and others large as they compare together, it is plain that the small cannot be infinitely great, and it follows of course that the largest cannot be infinite if the small bear any proportion to them. Now if all sin be of the finite character of the mortal sinner, is it not absurd to pretend that some sins are too great for the infinite goodness of God to forgive? The scripture is plain on this subject. See Isaiah, i. 18. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The most natural sense of this text is, that though the sin of the people were of the deepest dye, they might be washed away. How then is it proper to explain our text in a way to contradict this evident testimony? The forerunner of Jesus said of him; "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Here is no exception, *no* reserve. The beloved disciple says; "If we *confess* our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us

our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.—The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." In these passages there is mention made of the sin of the world, of all sin and of all unrighteousness, and the power of the blessed Son of God is honored as being sufficient to overcome the whole, without any exception.

If the hearer will be careful enough to attend to a particular method of argument on this subject, we will endeavor to prove from the divine oracles that it is the design of the Saviour to cleanse every sinner of the human race from all sin, not excepting the sin against the Holy Ghost. If the hearer say, that this argument is off of our subject, and that what he wishes to know is, why the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost may not be forgiven, or why it could not be forgiven as soon as other sins, he may be told, that the argument proposed is thought to be necessary in order to settle the question whether the sin against the Holy Ghost is ever to be forgiven according to the scriptures. If we find that this sin will eventually be washed away by the blood of Christ, then our main question will be to ascertain why it could not be forgiven "neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

St. Paul in his 1st Epistle to Timothy lays it down as an important fact in the great truths of the gospel, that Jesus, the Mediator between God and men, had given himself a ransom for all men, to be testified in due time. To the Ephesians he lays it down as an important fact, that Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. By these two passages we have it proved that all men constitute the church of Christ which he hath purchased with his own blood. This agrees also with this Apostle's declaration to the Corinthians; "I would have you to know, that the head of every man is Christ." To the Hebrews he says, that Jesus, by the grace of God tasted death for every man; and the beloved John said, that he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Now it is certain, that if we can prove any thing from the scriptures, we have proved, *by the quotations* made, that the blessed Sa-

viour of the world gave himself a ransom for those Pharisees who spoke this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost that he tasted death for them, and that he was the propitiation for their sins. All this is undeniably proved. We ask in the next place, why Jesus gave himself for the church? The Apostle answers in the place quoted from Ephesians as follows; "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." The argument amounts to this. Jesus gave himself for his church, he gave himself a ransom for those pharisees who spake blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; they therefore belong to his church. Jesus gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word. He therefore gave himself a ransom for these blasphemous pharisees, that he might sanctify and cleanse them.

To the Romans St. Paul says; "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Then surely by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, the free gift had came on those Pharisees who spake against the Holy Ghost, unto justification of life. In this same Epistle he says; "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Then it is evident that all who have sinned and come short of the glory of God are freely justified, through the redemption of which the apostle here spake; and if so, then those Pharisees, who sinned by blaspheming against the Holy Ghost were freely justified, &c.

What must be done in this case? Will the objector say, that the testimony of Christ, that those who blasphemed against the Holy Ghost should not be forgiven "neither in this world, neither in the world to *come,*" plainly disproves all which St. Paul has said

on the subject? But why have we not equal authority to say, that what has been quoted from St Paul disproves what Jesus said to the Pharisees? What we have quoted from the Apostle is much more than what Jesus said concerning this blasphemy's not being forgiven. Pardon this form of expression; it is designed to bring the hearer to consider how the testimony of both Jesus and Paul may be allowed to stand good as the faithful word of divine truth.

We may now endeavor to give the direct reason why this blasphemy could not be forgiven as soon as other sins. If we confine ourselves to the sense of scripture on this subject we shall find that not only these Pharisees had a design to answer by speaking against the spirit by which Jesus cast out devils, but God himself had also a design to answer by it, and therefore this sin must remain unwashed away until the design of our heavenly Father shall be fully answered. Perhaps some will say, that the supposition that the divine Being had any purpose to answer by means of this blasphemy is blasphemy itself. But the speaker feels fully satisfied on this point of doctrine, (viz.) that no sin can exist a moment longer than it answers some divine purpose. We may here recollect what was seen when we treated in our last lecture on the subject of Joseph and his brethren. Was it not evidently seen that the partiality of Jacob in favor of the son of his old age was controlled by divine wisdom to answer a good purpose? Was it not seen that the envy of the sons of Jacob towards Joseph was overruled for good? Was it not seen that the avarice of those wicked men was made use of by divine Providence to check the power of anger and to promote a wise, benevolent object?

But what object, what purpose of God could possibly be promoted by such abominable blasphemies as this of which we read in our text? Answer, the blindness of the house of Israel, the fulfilling of the prophecies concerning Jesus, and the establishment of the gospel in the world on principles consistent with *prophetic testimony*. If the religious Jews had believed

that Jesus wrought all his miracles by the spirit of God, they of course would have received him as the Messiah. If they had thus received him they would not have rejected him, despised him, nor would they have put him to death. Then surely the testimony of the prophets would have proved false, and the scriptures written by holy men of God moved by the Holy Ghost could never have gained credit among the Gentiles.

As the astonishing miracles wrought by the hand of Jesus were designed by heaven as proper evidence of his Messiahship, the blasphemy of imputing these miracles to the power of an evil agent was the only sin that could prevent the religious Jews from believing in Christ. That this unbelief of the Jews was necessary for the fulfilment of the prophecies we are certified by the following scriptures. St. John, 12. "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." Romans, 11. "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." In the passage quoted from St. John we find it plainly stated that the unbelief of the Jews was necessary for the fulfilment of the prophecy of Esaias; and furthermore it is stated that in consequence of what God had done, "they could not believe." By the passage quoted from Romans we learn the special utility of the Jews' unbelief; it was that through it the Gentiles might obtain mercy. As the Jews' unbelief led them to fulfil the prophecies, concerning the *Messiah, so* their unbelief presented to the Gentiles the *proper evidence* of the divinity of the scriptures of the

prophets, and of the mission of Jesus. Here then, we may say, we have proved that our heavenly Father has plainly revealed in his word, that he had a divine purpose to answer by means of the Jews' unbelief, which was to communicate his grace to the Gentiles. This being granted, or rather proved, it must follow of course that when this unbelief or blasphemy has effected all which God designed by it, the merciful Father of our spirits will use means to remove it from the house of Israel; and therefore it is said, as quoted from Romans, 11; "Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." As the unbelief of the Jews was the means of communicating mercy to the Gentiles, so in return, the mercy which the Gentiles have by such means obtained will finally be communicated to the Jews. We read again in this chapter the following: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." When the fulness of the Gentiles shall be converted to Christ, then the blasphemy of the Jews will have answered the purpose for which God designed it, and then the deliverer of Israel will be sent out of Sion and will turn away this ungodliness from Jacob.

The hearer can scarcely avoid seeing that all these things are made plain by the testimony of divine inspiration; but many find a very great difficulty in submitting to the idea that the divine Being ever intended to answer any purpose by means of man's transgression. Yet in the case of Joseph's brethren, it is fully evident, that God made use of their wickedness to promote their brother to great power, and to give him an opportunity of rewarding them good for their evil towards him. So, also, the wickedness of the Jews, their hatred towards the blessed Jesus, and their blasphemy against the spirit by which his miracles were *wrought*, all served and still serve to bring

the object of their envy before the world of the Gentiles as the glorious Messiah promised in the law and in the prophets, and to establish the doctrine of God's everlasting love to sinners on a foundation that can never be shaken. And to crown the whole of this divine plan with glory and complete success, after this wickedness of the Jews shall have produced the effects before noticed, the blessed Redeemer, will then, like Joseph, make himself known unto his brethren the Jews, saying, as he did to one of them, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest." It is worthy of notice that Joseph's brethren, by means of their hatred to him, gave a saviour to the land of Egypt and to many other countries; and also, that thousands of Egyptians rejoiced in this most gracious saviour before his own dear brethren were brought to know him, or to partake of his bounty. So the Jews, by rejecting their Messiah, gave a glorious Saviour to the Gentiles who rejoice in knowing him and in feasting on his grace, while the Jews who gave him to us are weeping, wailing and gnashing their teeth. But thanks be to God, our Blessed Saviour knows his brethren, his bowels yearn upon them, he has stores of corn for their relief, soon will the burst of joy be heard through all the Gentile church, of Jesus' making himself known to his brethren. When the Saviour wept over Jerusalem, he closed his lamentation with these memorable words; "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

We may now inquire for the meaning of the following words in our text; "neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The word WORLD means age or dispensation. Jesus spake these words under the law, during the continuance of the legal priesthood. "*This world*," referred to the then present order of things, and "*the world to come*," to the age in which the Gentiles would be visited with the gospel, and the Jews excluded. That this is a definition of the word *WORLD which is* according to scripture, the hearer may

satisfy himself by attending to the following passages: In the 24th of Matthew, the disciples of Jesus asked him when the end of the world was to come; and in his reply he represented to them the destruction of Jerusalem as the end of the world, and told them it would take place in that generation. St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews says, of Christ; "But now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Other passages to the same effect may also be consulted at the hearer's leisure.

It is true that some who believe that this sin against the Holy Ghost will finally be forgiven, carry its punishment into a future world, meaning thereby a future state of existence. But as they, after all, are under the necessity of understanding the word WORLD as we have explained it, that is, to mean a dispensation, it seems unnecessary to carry this sin into a future state beyond our mortal existence. And more especially does this appear unnecessary, because all the benefit which it appears was designed to be effected by the unbelief of the Jews, seems evidently to appertain to this state of being. If it can be made to appear that God has some good end to answer, by having this sin, or any other exist in a future world, we shall cordially subscribe to such a belief; but to suppose that the Almighty will perpetuate any sin in a future state only for the sake of tormenting his dependant offspring is dishonorable to his ever blessed and gracious name.—The opinion that the divine Being exercises a disposition of revenge towards man for sin, as a man who has received an injury from his neighbor is influenced thereby to injure him in return, is totally contrary to the religion of Jesus, and is altogether degrading both to God and man. The Father of our spirits, always exercises one invariable disposition towards all his creatures; this disposition is love. It was love that moved God to overrule circumstances so as to send Joseph into Egypt by means of his brethren's envy, and these brethren were the objects of this love, and they finally *enjoyed its blessed* fruits. The same love mov

ed our Father in heaven so to overrule circumstances as to bring Jesus to the cross by means of the blasphemy mentioned in our text, and it is evidently the revealed determination of God, that the blasphemous Jews shall richly share of the divine grace which they have been the means of manifesting to the world. God is good, and his intentions are good when he permits the evil passions of man to lead him into sin; he is good, and his intentions are all compassionate and kind when he brings on his erring children the most severe of his chastisements; and he is also good in finally producing the peaceable fruits of righteousness in those whom he causes to feel his rod.

After having presented the hearer with what appears to be the true design of the text under consideration, it may be profitable to look at the common opinion on the subject and see if it have the resemblance of the spirit of Christ. The common opinion of our text is this; the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is a sin too great ever to be forgiven, and therefore the blasphemer must be punished in a most awful state of torment eternally; or as long as God exists. But let us ask, why is this sin so great? Why may it not be forgiven? Why should the Almighty become unkind to his children because they have committed this sin? Is the Almighty injured by this sin? No, God cannot be injured by his creatures. Was Jesus injured as much by this blasphemy as the common doctrine supposes those will be injured who committed it? No, it is allowed that Jesus rests in glory in heaven. Then the law that requires an eye for an eye does not require that the blasphemer should be punished world without end. But suppose the most awful punishment be inflicted to all eternity on those blasphemers, is this exactly according to the spirit of Jesus, who on the cross, prayed; "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do?" Jesus commanded his disciples to love their enemies, to pray for those that used them spitefully and persecuted them; is it according to this spirit and disposition, that he will torment his enemies eternally in the merciless flames of fire and brimstone? If

it be safe to believe, that Jesus will always possess and exercise the same spirit of love and compassion, which so distinctly marked the character which he exhibited in the days of his flesh, we certainly have no more reason to believe that he will consign the blasphemous Jews to never ending torment, than we have to believe that every tender, fond mother in America will, at the expiration of a short given time, commit her tenderest offspring to the flames. Let those who contend for the common unmerciful doctrine, to the support of which the text under consideration is usually applied, duly consider the words of Jesus, to those of his disciples, who manifested a disposition to command fire from heaven on the inhabitants of a village of Samaria; "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."

The enemy of the spirit of God and of truth will say in reply to the foregoing arguments, if these things are all so, we may sin with impunity and blaspheme without fear; we may hate God, disregard his commandments, give no heed to the gospel and abuse the Saviour. Though we hope that none present are so blind, so hard hearted, so dead to the spirit of truth as to make these suggestions, yet it may be serviceable to guard against such insinuations, as we know the opposers of divine truth are continually making use of them against the doctrine of divine love. Come, then, and let us reason together on this subject. Are you willing to step forth boldly and say to the world, that the more you believe in the goodness of God, the more you feel disposed to hate and disobey him? The more confident you are that the Saviour is your unchangeable friend, the more you feel disposed to abuse him? No, there is neither male nor female in the world so morally deranged as to talk in this way. How then will the opposer argue? He will say that it is his opinion that the doctrine contended for in this discourse is of dangerous tendency. But who does it dangerously influence? Certainly not the believer of *it, for a belief in the divine* goodness tends to fill the

believer with love to God, and love to God is that alone which can lead us to obey him. Who, then, does this doctrine affect so dangerously? If any, it must be the unbeliever, the opposer. Here we must allow the argument, in a sense, for the preaching of Jesus himself tended to enrage his enemies, his miracles of mercy tended to open their mouths in blasphemy. But would it have been better not to preach the truth because it stirred up the opposition? Would it have been better not to cast out devils because if he cast them out the Pharisees would blaspheme and say, that "this fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils?"

The opposer will say, perhaps, that he means this; if we believe in so much goodness it will tend to make us worse. But this is absurd; for every thing tends to its own, goodness to goodness, evil to evil, love to love, hatred to hatred, harmony to harmony, discord to discord, friendship to friendship, enmity to enmity.

But, says the objector, according to this doctrine there is no punishment for sin, no, not even for this awful blasphemy. Here again is a mistake. For nearly eighteen hundred years the Jews, the descendants of him to whom the promise of the gospel was made, have wandered in "outer darkness," in consequence of this blasphemy, and how much longer they will continue in this unhappy situation none but our merciful Father in heaven knows. But the objector will say that these arguments do not suppose that the Pharisees who blasphemed in the days of Jesus on earth are now burning in fire and brimstone for that sin in the immortal world. No, we see no evidence of this. If people are possessed with devils in the eternal world, and if Jesus cast out devils in that world, and these old Pharisees there in that world believe and say that he casts out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils, then it is granted, that in the eternal world they must be punished for such unreasonable folly.

But, my brethren, let us learn wisdom by the *examples* furnished in the word of God, and remem-

ber that now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation; and that none but the willing and obe dient eat the good of the land.

LECTURE X.

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.

ROMANS, xi. 7.

What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

THE design in view which has led to the choice of this portion of divine truth, as a subject of our present lecture, is to investigate the scripture doctrine of election, to show the strict sovereignty, of God in electing some and binding others, the righteousness of God in the exercise of his sovereignty, and to disprove the common doctrine of election which supposes, that our heavenly Father, from eternity, elected some to everlasting life, and predestinated others to a state of endless misery.

Our subject is one in which every christian must feel deeply interested, as it essentially concerns the divine character, his revealed will concerning the final state of mankind, together with the ultimate object of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is therefore hoped that due attention and impartial candor will contribute to their utmost to a correct understanding of the weighty subject under consideration.

By "the election" in our text the Apostle means a remnant of the house of Israel, who had obtained what the whole had sought for, but of which the greatest part had come short, being blinded. In the preceding chapters the Author had spoken of the failure of the house of Israel in their endeavors to attain to the law of righteousness, and of the more favorable condition of the Gentiles, who though they did not follow after *righteousness*, yet had "attained to righteousness, even

the righteousness which is of faith." To the Gentiles he applies a prophesy of Esaias as follows; "I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest to them that asked not after me." But concerning the house of Israel he uses the following words: "But to Israel he saith, all day long, I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." In the commencement of this chapter his attention seems to be directed to make it appear that, notwithstanding all which he had said, God had by no means, cast away the whole of his people, the Jews. The following is his reasoning on the subject: "I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias, how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone and they seek my life? But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." That is, as in the days of Elijah it pleased God to reserve seven thousand of the Israelites to be true worshippers of himself, while the rest bowed the knee to Baal, so now, while the general mass of the stock of Abraham are blinded, have stumbled at the stumbling stone laid in Sion, and are broken off through unbelief, there is a remnant still preserved, who have escaped the general calamity, and have by grace obtained what the others sought for but found not; of this remnant, the Apostle reckons himself as one.

The hearer is now called on to direct his attention to understand, that this election was not made with the least reference to the works of the chosen. This the Apostle is careful to notice in a most plain and positive manner. See his observation in the 6th verse. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is *no more grace*. But if it be of works

then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." This argument supposes that if this election had been according to works, grace would have been entirely excluded; but as it was by grace, works were excluded. In the 9th chapter the author in describing the sovereignty of God in the election of Jacob in preference to Esau, says; "For the children being not yet born; neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand not of works, but of him that calleth." And in further arguing on this subject he adds; "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy, on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scriptures saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." To confirm his divine sovereignty still further the inspired Apostle adds the following significant query; "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

Not only does the Apostle labour to show that the remnant of the house of Israel, which he calls the election, were elected according to the strict sovereignty of God and called by the riches of sovereign grace, and made vessels of mercy according to the same unconditional grace of God, but he also directs his argument to prove that the blindness of the Jews in general, their hardness of heart, &c., was effected *also* by the sovereign will and pleasure of God,

"According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear. And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway." On the same subject we read in the prophecy of Isaiah as follows; "And he said, go, and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed." And that this work of hardening and blinding the house of Israel was effectually done we have the assurance in the 12th chapter of the gospel of St. John: "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias when he saw his glory and spake of him." In this passage it is stated that "they could not believe." It is therefore evident that they were effectually blinded, and to all intents hardened so that to believe in Jesus was not in their power. It appears furthermore, that the Saviour himself regarded this blindness of the Jews with peculiar caution, and delivered his doctrine in parables on purpose that they might not understand. Of this we are informed in Matthew 13th—"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." And because God saw fit to hide the things of the kingdom of his

grace from the Jews, Jesus expressed his thanks to the Father as recorded in Matthew 11th—"at that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." The reason here given why the Father had hidden these things from the Jews was that it seemed good in his sight so to do.

Let us attend, in the next place, to see if we can learn from the divine testimony, the special good which was brought about by the exercise of the divine sovereignty in the instances which have been noticed. This is a subject of vast concern, for the sentiment we embrace respecting it directly affects the moral character of the divine Being: If we consent to the opinion, that the elect which we have noticed are elected unto eternal life, to enjoy endless felicity, while those who are not of the elect are predestinated to everlasting destruction in the future, eternal world, we thereby charge God with partiality; and it is utterly in vain to attempt to clear the divine Being of this partiality while we admit such a sentiment. It is true, our christian doctors have contended, that some were elected from all eternity unto eternal life, and the rest of mankind were reprobated to endless misery for the glory of God; and they are therefore unwilling to allow that there is any partiality in God in thus disposing of his creatures for his own glory. But if we allow ourselves to be more particular on this subject, is it not evident according to this sentiment that the glory of God requires him to be good and merciful to some men, but utterly unmerciful to others? As this must be granted, it follows of necessary consequence, that the glory of God requires him to be partial. Nor does it alter the case in the least to say, that the greatest possible good of the whole, requires the endless misery of some; for this amounts to the same thing, viz. the greatest possible good of the whole consists in partial goodness, which is an absurdity. If we are able to find out *what it is* that the righteousness of God, according to

the purpose of election, consists in, it must be something that accords with our views of moral righteousness; for nothing can be more evident than that we can see no righteousness in that which is contrary to all our sense of right. For instance, should an earthly parent choose three children out of nine to partake of all the favors which he could possibly bestow from his ample wealth, and destine the remaining six to the most severe wretchedness that could possibly be endured, and all this should be directed by the sovereign will of the parent without any regard to the conduct of the children, we should be under the necessity of pronouncing this conduct partial and unrighteous. If this parent should inform us, that he did this for the promotion of his glory as a parent, it would answer no purpose, as to giving the least satisfaction that his conduct was right. Or if he should inform us that he acted, in all this, for the good of the whole, and that the greatest good of the whole required the utter ruin and destruction of two thirds; this would reflect no light on the subject. But if the parent of nine children had a piece of work to perform which was indispensable for the richest benefit of all his offspring, and that in order to effect this object it was necessary for some, two, or three, to know certain things relative to his plan, and equally necessary for the rest to be ignorant of those things which were revealed to the few, there is no difficulty in seeing the impartiality of the parent in making known to certain individuals what he carefully kept from the rest. And even should he use means to blind his children in this case it would be perfectly consistent with his grand object, and consistent with impartial goodness.

Christian hearer, suppose yourself one of the children, who was enlightened into the mysteries of this scheme which was wisely planned for the best good of yourself and of the whole family; suppose too that you sincerely loved all your family, and could clearly see how all were to be benefitted by the blindness, or ignorance of those who were unenlightened, would *it not be perfectly* natural for you to thank your father

for hiding those mysteries from them, and revealing them to you? With these enlightened views, and in the exercise of impartial love towards those who were in darkness should you not be willing to suffer any reproach from them which, on account of their necessary ignorance, they might heap upon you? And would you not esteem the knowledge of the truth for which you might suffer sufficient to countervail all your sufferings? Sometimes would you not feel such ardent desires towards your deceived brethren as would lead you to wish yourself in their ignorance, if thereby they might be permitted to see what you were blessed with seeing, and hear that which you rejoiced to hear?

Dearly beloved hearer, your humble servant feels perfectly satisfied that this is the true spirit and light of the wisdom of God; he enjoys a full persuasion that the elections of God recorded in the scriptures are all established on this eternal principle of impartial goodness, and that every elected, enlightened child of God is exercised with this spirit of love and pity for those who are in unbelief.

That those, of whom the Apostle spake in our text as not obtaining what they sought for, but were blinded, were the subjects of the divine favor, that their blindness was necessary for the benefit of the world, and that they were designed, in the wisdom of God, to be partakers of the benefits arising to the world from their blindness and fall, the Apostle fully proves in the chapter where our text is written, as we shall now proceed to show.

Let us notice the text and what follows; "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence *unto them*: let their eyes be darkened, that they may *not see,* and bow down their back alway." Here let

us pause.—Here let us ask, does divine revelation close this subject in this place? Does it afford no hope that these blinded, fallen sons of Israel, who stumbled at the stumbling stone laid in Zion will finally be received to favor? Are the inexorable doors of eternal mercy shut against them by an unalterable decree of the God of their fathers? If all this were true then would the doctrine of election and reprobation, as has been held in the christian church for ages be true also; but hark! What does the inspired apostle say further on this subject and concerning them who were blinded and had stumbled? "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now, if the fall of them, be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them, the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead.—For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree, which is wild by nature and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree, how much more shall they, which be the natural branches be grafted into their own olive-tree? For I would not brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery (lest ye should be wise in your own conceit,) that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. For the gifts and calling of God, are without repentance. For as ye in times past, have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them *all in* unbelief, that he might have *mercy upon all!*" On such luminous testimony as

this, comment is needless. With less blindness than that which happened to Israel, no one can avoid seeing that it was the design of the inspired author to prove that the Jews' blindness was advantageous to the gentile world, and that they would eventually be the happy partakers of that grace which was revealed to the Gentiles by means of their blindness. The hearer will carefully observe the connexion between this subject and the one treated of in our last lecture, and examine the whole of this chapter on the momentous subject of this inquiry by which he may see the glorious light which caused the Apostle to exclaim; "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

By the Calvinistic doctrine of election we have been taught to believe, that the remnant according to the election of grace, of which the Apostle speaks in our context, "the election" of which he speaks in our text were all that were the beloved objects of divine mercy of the whole house of Israel; and that they who were blinded, were predestinated from eternity to endless darkness and misery. But by the evident sense of the divine testimony on this subject we have ample evidence to believe, what has been so fully proved, that "all Israel shall be saved." Those blinded Jews were the objects of the Saviour's grace as much as those who were chosen to receive and preserve the knowledge of him. They were those of the family, who, it was necessary should be ignorant of the truth which was revealed to others of the same family for the benefit of all. Our blessed Saviour manifested towards those blinded Jews, the most tender, affectionate regard. His pity for them melted him into tears, he wept over them with as much tenderness as Joseph wept over his brethren.

St. Paul was one of the family who was for some time blinded; during which time he was active in assisting his brethren who also were blind, in prosecuting their persecutions against the enlightened disciples of Jesus. He was afterward himself, brought to know

the truth, to understand the mystery of the wisdom and goodness of God in blinding the Jews, and he ever seemed to be exercised with a spirit and disposition of compassion for his brethren according to the flesh.

In the beginning of the 10th chapter of this epistle he expresses himself as follows; "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." In the beginning of the 9th chapter he has the following indication of most fervent benevolence; "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed, from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Christian hearer, when you were asked, on supposition you were one of the family that was enlightened in certain matters concerning which your brethren were in the dark, if you might not feel willing to exchange circumstances with the unenlightened, did you not feel an assent to the question? And does it not seem that this was the exact case of the Apostle? He knew that he was chosen of God, enlightened by the Saviour, made a vessel of mercy, and ordained to the work of the ministry for no good that he had done. It was not possible, therefore, that with all this knowledge, he could feel unmerciful towards his brethren, who remained exactly in the situation from which the grace of God had taken him. It was therefore, with unspeakable satisfaction, that he anticipated the happy event of the turning away of ungodliness from Jacob, and the salvation of all Israel.

Brethren, though a regret is felt that better justice has not been done to the weighty subject under consideration, yet a hope is entertained that you clearly see, that the blindness of those Jews who were not of the elect spoken of in our text, was designed for the benefit of the Gentile world; and that when their blindness shall have effected all for which it was designed in the wisdom of God, it will be removed, and the blinded *will be saved* in Sion's deliverer. And fur-

thermore, that the elected ones were chosen, not for their benefit alone, but for the good likewise of those who were not elected.

We may now look for a moment, and see if this doctrine of election agrees with the scriptures generally and with reason. The doctrine of election according to the views we have taken of it, supposes that those who are elected, are elected for the benefit of those who are not elected. The prophet Isaiah in the 42d chapter speaks of an elect of God as follows; 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.——I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." This elect of God is the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of the world, of whom the Apostle John says; "we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." This elect of God is the One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time." Thus it is evident that this elect was designed for the benefit of the whole world.

The Saviour also himself had an elect. He chose his Apostles and ordained them to preach his grace and salvation to the whole world. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This elect therefore, was for the benefit of the whole world.

Being one of the elect, and having received a dispensation of the gospel of reconciliation, St. Paul said to the Romans, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." Here we see that what the world lacked, the *Apostles* of Jesus had for it, what the wise and the unwise lacked St. Paul had for them. The Apostles were *not chosen* to be the exclusive partakers of the grace

which they received, but were commanded by the divine Master to bestow as freely on others, as they had received. It seems a fair conclusion from the facts noticed, that the grace of God which is specially communicated to his elect is ultimately designed as much for those who are not elected as for those who are.

This doctrine is perfectly consistent with the dictates of reason and is analogous with the prudent management of civil community.

In all societies a few are elected for the benefit of the whole. They are never chosen to monopolize all the blessings of society to themselves, but to make as equal a distribution of burdens and favors, of expenses and profits as possible. Look at the elected officers of the town; they see for the blind, they hear for the deaf, they walk for the lame, they have wealth for the poor, they provide for those who cannot provide for themselves. Notice every officer in the general government of our country, up to the presidency; men are elected to fill all these places, not for their exclusive benefit, but for the good of the whole union.

Let us ask, where in the vast creation, did the wisdom of this world find the Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation? Does the sun shine to light himself alone? Are his fervid beams designed to warm his own bosom only? And in the mild rays of the queen of night does she alone rejoice? Do winds blow to refresh themselves? Are rivers designed for their own benefit? What element, what vegetable, what animal exists for itself only?

> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body nature is, and God the soul."

To conclude. Let us duly notice the moral tendency of divine truth, as seen in the subject under consideration. God is good to all, his tender mercies are over all his works. This truth demands of every rational being the exercise of that diffusive benevolence *which embraces the* whole creation. Those whom *God chooses to enlighten* by his grace, while others *are blinded, are appointed* to administer the riches of

the manifold wisdom and goodness of God to such as lack the knowledge of his ways. The spirit of Christ is love to enemies, his grace is the salvation of sinners; if therefore, we partake of his spirit and enjoy his grace we shall be led thereby to love our enemies and to administer saving grace to those who walk in sin. Is it not a fact that limited views of the goodness of God have limited the charity of those who had them? and have not those opinions, which maintain that the Father of our spirits will execute unspeakable vengeance on a large proportion of the human family eternally, effectually hardened the hearts of those who have been led by them, and rendered them in too many instances, unreasonable enthusiasts and violent persecutors of those who have not conformed to their superstitions?

Not only does the impartial grace which we have seen in the doctrine of election lead us to love all men, and to do good to all men, but it shows us that we are no better than those who are blind respecting this divine and glorious system of truth. This doctrine naturally leads the believer to pity the blindness of those who do not see; but it gives the consoling anticipation of the final reconciliation of all things through Jesus Christ our Lord. It fills the heart with gratitude to God, who so wisely planned and so graciously designed the blindness of the house of Israel, that thereby salvation might come unto the Gentiles; and has so ordained in his impartial goodness, that the blinded Jews shall eventually obtain the mercy now enjoyed by the Gentiles. Thus of the twain, the wisdom of God makes one new man, so making peace. Therefore we read; "Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people. And again, praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him all ye people."

LECTURE XI.

GOD RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF, THROUGH CHRIST.

II. CORINTHIANS, v. 18, 19, 20.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

It is a peculiar and distinguishing characteristic of the gospel dispensation, that it exhibits a new order of things, brings the glad tidings of better things than were before understood, sheds a clearer light on mental vision than was before enjoyed, makes a brighter manifestation of the gracious designs of the wisdom of God than was made by the legal dispensation, and creates new views, new desires, and new affections of heart. The gospel of God our Saviour, contemplates the world of mankind as being in a state of death, from which state its divine efficacies were designed to quicken man into newness of life by the spirit of truth. These suggestions seem to be embraced by the Apostle in our context where he says; "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Applied to the Jewish converts, these words of the Apostle are designed to notice the passing away of the legal dispensation with all its rites, and the introduction of the better covenant and more excellent ministry of the gospel; and as they apply to Gentile believers they re-regard the total overthrow of all the idols and idol worship among the heathen, and their reformation to the knowledge, laws and ordinances of the gospel of Christ.

To these *new things* the Apostle alludes in our text, and says; "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself," &c.

The first particular subject of our text is what is embraced in the reconciliation of the ambassadors of Christ to God. Concerning this subject the Apostle's testimony makes the following things evident. 1st. That they had been in a state of unreconciliation. 2. That the whole process, from the beginning to the end of the work of their reconciliation was of God. 3d. That this work was effected by Jesus Christ. Perhaps no man was ever more unreconciled to God, to Christ, or to the gospel than the author of our text had been; and it was well known to him that he was not the author of those means by which he became reconciled. He well knew that the knowledge of Jesus, in the excellency of which he afterward so much rejoiced was by no means the object of his enquiry or pursuit at the time and on the occasion to which he refers when giving an account of his miraculous conversion to christianity. He often adverted to his views, his designs, and to his conduct while opposed to the gospel, but in no instance did he give any intimation that he obtained the grace of the Saviour in consequence of his own faithful exertions. Similar remarks may justly be made respecting the Apostles who were chosen by our divine Redeemer during his personal ministry. Some he called from a lucrative office under the Roman government, others from the laborious employment of fishermen; but it is evident that the Saviour made his own selections without regard to the wisdom *or will of his* chosen, for he informed them as follows;

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that you should go and bring forth fruit." Indeed there is an evident absurdity in the supposition that God reconciles any to himself on account of their good works, for those who are obedient unto righteousness are not unreconciled to God. For want of making proper distinctions between causes and effects, many well meaning and pious people have maintained that the divine favor is to be obtained by the penitence, faith, and good works of men not discerning clearly, that repentance, faith and good works are the effects and not the causes of the favor of God. Let us here indulge a simile. A number of children, at that age when passions and fancy are vastly more powerful than reason and solid judgment, leave the paternal mansion, disgusted at the rules of prudence, industry and economy established in the domestic circle, in quest of fancied pleasures in the indulgence of those passions which grow restless under restraint. The race is short; they soon fall into wretchedness and want, but do not yet understand their errors. To save them from this sad condition the still affectionate father undertakes to make such communications to them as may convince them of the propriety of his laws, the indispensable necessity of his prudence and economy for the good of his family, and to reconcile them to himself. The means which the father uses for the purpose mentioned are so wisely planned, and so well executed that they eventuate in effecting the deserved object. The children become convinced of the excellency of those laws and regulations at which they were so much offended, they see the madness and folly of their wicked indulgences, sorrow of heart and sincere repentance are effectually wrought in them, and they finally return to their gracious parent and devote themselves to his service, which is now no longer grievous, but joyous. Would it be at all reasonable for these reformed children to believe that their repentance and return to their parent were means which obtained the love and good will of their father? Surely *it would be* most unreasonable, for it is evident

that the children's repentance and return were the effects and not the causes of the parental kindness. In the enjoyment of all the blessings of their father's house, and with a clear understanding concerning all these circumstances, might they not say with great propriety, All things are of our wise and most merciful Father, who hath reconciled us unto himself.

Let us, in the next place, lend our attention to the consideration of these words in our text; "and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." By these words we learn that the same ministry, by which the ambassadors of Christ were reconciled to God, was given to them for the purpose of reconciling others; by which the following facts are clearly suggested. 1st. That mankind at large, to whom the Apostles were directed to preach the gospel, were in the same state of unreconciliation in which these ambassadors of Christ had been, and from which the ministry of divine grace had reclaimed them. 2. That the same divine favor, by which these ambassadors were reconciled to God, is treasured up in the gospel ministry for those who remain unreconciled; and 3d. That the ambassadors of Christ have nothing to administer to the unbelieving and unreconciled but such as has been administered to them, by which they became reconciled to God. These facts are evidently embraced in this part of our subject and deserve a careful attention. By losing sight of these things, the minister of the word is exposed to corrupt it, and in room of administering the pure gospel of reconciliation, as it has been communicated to himself, he may imagine himself authorised to deal with others in a very different manner from that in which the divine favor was administered to him.

Without any design to trouble the feelings of those who entertain sentiments differing from our own, but with a humble desire to reflect light on our subject, let us ask if we have any information which authorizes us to believe that St. Paul was threatened with the everlasting vengeance of an incensed, vindictive wrath *unless he* repented of his sins and believed in the Lord

Jesus? It is true the same question may with equal propriety be asked concerning all the Apostles, but the single case of St. Paul, who was the author of the scripture under consideration, is sufficient to try the question, and place the subject in a clear light. The account recorded in the 26th of Acts, which was solemnly given in by the Apostle himself, before king Agrippa is so very important in itself, and so essential to the present query that the hearer will listen with attention to what may be recited from it. After having given a particular relation of his past life in the Jews' religion, his full persuasion that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, and that he actually did those things shutting up the saints in prison and giving his voice against them when they were put to death, punishing them oft in every Synagogue and compelling them to blaspheme, &c. he proceeds as follows; "Whereupon, I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priest, at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, about the brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them that journied with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying, in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." In this most solemn and interesting account is there the least intimation of the threatening vengeance noticed in our query? Surely there is not. Indeed there appears to have been no conditions stated in

the case. Jesus said to Saul; "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness," &c. Jesus did not appear to this persecutor to propose what are now called *terms of grace* and *conditions of salvation*, but to make him a minister and a witness. And as there were no threatnings nor conditions in the ministration by which Saul was converted to christianity and made a minister of the same ministry of reconciliation, so he was not directed to go to the Gentiles with threatenings and conditions, but he was sent to them to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God." Jesus opened Saul's eyes, turned him from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God, that he might receive the forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them who are sanctified; and he sent him to the Gentiles to work the same on them.

That the Apostles might be duly furnished with the true ministry of reconciliation; the WORD of reconciliation was committed to them as designated in our text, as follows; "That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." This word and ministry of reconciliation does not impute men's trespasses to them, but exercises the means of reconciliation on them.

That this subject may be understood according to its evangelical principles the following particulars, which are implied in the words under consideration may be noticed. 1st. God is not unreconciled to sinners and therefore needs not to be reconciled to them. 2d. Sinners are unreconciled to God, and therefore he has designed to reconcile them to himself by means of the gospel ministry; and 3d. The ministry of the gospel comes with all the means necessary to reconcile sinners to God.

The opinion that our heavenly Father became inimical to man in consequence of his sin is not only in direct opposition to the sentiment of our text, but is also repugnant to the essential character of the divine *Being*. How is it possible to maintain that God is

unchangeable, the same yesterday to day and forever, and yet suppose that his disposition towards his creatures is changed by their conduct? Again, it denies the infinite knowledge of God to suppose that he became unfriendly to us by reason of our sin; for if he knew before he made us that we should fall into temptation and become sinful, he had all the reason to be our enemy then that he has had since. Moreover it denies the divine goodness to allow that he made a being when he knew that the work of his own hands would incur his divine displeasure. Indeed, the supposition that our Father in heaven became our enemy in consequence of our sin, makes him to violate the grand principle, which more than any other, distinctly marks out the law of righteousness expressed by the Saviour as follows; "I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth the rain on the just and on the unjust." As the divine Teacher, in the passage here recited, notices the divine Being in the character of a Father, it may be proper to observe in this place that it is inconsistent with the character of an earthly father to become an enemy to his offspring because his child is disobedient, and surely it would be much more repugnant to the character of our heavenly Father to become unfriendly to us for our faults.

The hearer is cautioned against construing this reasoning into a supposition, that our heavenly Father will not chastise his children for disobedience, for chastisement is the sure pledge of the father's love and faithfulness.

It may contribute to make our subject still plainer, if we inquire for the possible means whereby the Creator could be reconciled to mankind, if he were once our enemy. Will it be said, that what his Holy Child Jesus has done in our world was designed by his *Father to reconcile him* to the world? Truly,

this has been believed, but it is in direct opposition to the testimony of Jesus, who said; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. If God send his Son into the world because he loved it, he certainly did not send him into the world to reconcile himself to those whom he loved. It is a thing at which reason marvels, that learned men should ever have been so absurd as to suppose, that God could use means to reconcile himself to his creatures, and that the sufferings of Jesus were designed for this purpose; for if God loved us he was not unreconciled to us; and if he did not love us, but was an enemy to us, he would have done nothing for our good.

Contrary to these notions of reconciling God to men the ministry of the gospel is designed to reconcile men to God, by which ministry the trespasses of men are not imputed to them, but are forgiven.

Let us in the next place, notice the efficacies of the gospel ministry to effect the reconciliation designed by it. To understand this subject, it is necessary to know the cause of man's unreconciliation. This is his ignorance of the true character of God. This we learn from St. Paul's words, Ephesians, iv. 18. Speaking of the vanity of the Gentiles and their alienations he says; 'having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Because this was the situation of the Gentiles, Jesus told the Apostle that he sent him to them, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light. If there were any property of the divine Being, that is inimical to us, the more our eyes were 'opened to see its nature the more unreconciled we should be to it. But as God is infinitely gracious, unchangeably merciful, and altogether lovely, the more our eyes are opened to see and understand the blessed qualities of his *nature, the* more we are reconciled to him, and the

better we love him. Again, if our nature were totally opposite to the nature of God and holiness, the more we discovered of the nature of God, the more we should be opposed to it.

The fact is, God is the real source of all moral, intellectual nature, and a knowledge of him is the only means by which we can be reconciled to him, and the want of this knowledge is the real cause of our unreconciliation.

In consistency with these well established facts, the gospel ministry brings the testimony and evidence of the love of God and of his divine goodness to sinners. The following is the testimony; "When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.——For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.——But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.——Herein is love, not that we loved God; but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for sins."

By such testimony it is seen, that the ministration of reconciliation brings, in the most direct manner, the love of God to the understanding of the sinner, by which repentance is wrought in the heart, and the soul brought to love God; for it is the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance, and again, we are told, that "we love him because he first loved us."

It is contended by many that it is dangerous to inform sinners that God is really kind and merciful to them. It is thought that this information, if it be true, will tend to make them worse. Why then do the scriptures abound with such testimony? And again, why did not the manifestation of the love and compassion of Jesus to Saul make him worse? Jesus said to him; "*Saul, Saul, why* persecutest thou me?" Why *did not this enemy of* Christ reply; I persecute you

because you love me, I hate your name because in it alone I am sensible I have salvation: and now as your compassions fail not, and you are determined to make me a minister of divine mercy, I am determined to hate you more and persecute you tenfold to what I have heretofore? If there were no danger in making such a glorious display of the goodness of God to this so great an enemy of the gospel, how should it happen that similar manifestations to sinners now should be so very dangerous as is represented by those who are the ministers of wrath and condemnation?

It may be useful in this place to notice some of the similes used in scripture to represent the ministration of reconciliation. By the prophet Isaiah Christ is called a LIGHT to lighten the Gentiles, and Jesus said; "I am the light of the world," and having communicated his light to his disciples, he told them, that they were the light of the world. Now according to the objection which we have noticed, it is dangerous to give light to them who are in darkness, for it may make them worse. Jesus said; "I am the bread of life." This is the bread which came down from heaven and giveth life to the world; but it is dangerous to give this bread to sinners, it is thought it may make them worse. Jesus represented the sinner by those who are sick, and himself as a physician. Will it do to say, it is dangerous to heal the sick because it may make them worse? No, these things are not so. Those who have been delivered from the power of darkness by the true light, have been thereby delivered from the power of satan and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Those who have eaten of the bread of God have found it to be spiritual life, and those who have received the healing balsam of the divine Physician have felt the power of sin to die within them, and have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

As it may be due to the situation of some minds, we may notice a question which is so often stated, viz: if the sinner may immediately receive divine favor, when *and* where is he to be punished for his sins? This *question* is made of great concern by those who be-

lieve that the gospel is a ministration of condemnation. But there is one thing we cannot but observe in those who urge this question; they never ask when they, themselves, are to be punished for their sins. They appear to have no concern about this weighty question as it regards themselves; their whole concern is about sinners. And this concern is not for fear they will be punished, but for fear they will not be.

Let us return the question to those who bring it, and ask them, when and where are you to receive the punishment for your sins? You contend, that the wicked must be punished, you are zealous to have the wicked punished; as Nathan said to David, "thou art the man."

> Turn, Pharisees, thine eyes within,
> Nor further search abroad for sin.

When and where was murderous David, king of Israel, punished for his sins? When and where was the author of our text, "the minister and witness" of Jesus, punished, for the murders which he had practised on the innocent lambs of Christ? We answer the question and say, sin and misery are inseparably united in the nature of cause and effect. When and where we are sinful, then and there we are our own tormentors. "The way of the transgressor is hard—there is no peace to the wicked."

Look at the nature of this subject. Jesus appeared to Saul, to make him a minister and a witness, to open the eyes of the Gentiles. But when were these Gentiles punished for being blind? The Apostle was to turn the Gentiles "from darkness to light." But when were they punished for being in the dark? He was to deliver them from the power of satan. But when were they punished for having been under satan's power? My brethren, satan's yoke is a hard service, his government is tyranical, and his power is oppressive.

The reason why our heavenly Father has sent the ministration of his grace to reconcile sinners to himself, *is, that they may* receive inheritance among them

who are sanctified. If satan's yoke were easy and if his burden were light, if sin and happiness were connected, why should the Almighty wish to deprive his creatures of this felicity? And if sin and all manner of vice afford happiness to man in this world, why will they not be permitted to continue hereafter, and there continue the source of human happiness? There never was a deception that operated so much to the disadvantage of mankind, as that of believing that happiness is to be obtained in sin. This deception makes slaves of millions, who devote themselves to their blind passions, and "are dead while they live." From this deception, from this slavery and from this death the ministry of reconciliation is designed to deliver the world. Therefore, the ambassadors of Jesus, cry, as in our text, "we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Reconciliation to God, is reconciliation to his revealed attributes and will, and consists in a conformity to the divine commands. A profession of religion may be totally disconnected with the reconciliation contemplated in our text, which is known, as was suggested in our introduction, by new views, new affections, and new desires. If we judge by their fruits, many have professed the religion of the Saviour, who have no different views from what they had before, only they now believe that they are more righteous than their neighbours; and remain as destitute of love to their brethren of the human family as ever. God is love; therefore to be reconciled to God, we must be reconciled to this divine principle. God is known to be love to all his creatures, because he actually does good to all. If we love all God's rational offspring, as our brethren, we are therein reconciled to God. St. Paul says; God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." If this will be in us, and if we can in sincerity pray for this will to be accomplished, we are therein reconciled. We are commanded to love our enemies and to do to others as we would have them to do to us, in doing which, we are *reconciled* to God. We are commanded to forgive

those who trespass against us, in which we resemble our Heavenly Father who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. We are commanded to forgive one another, as God, for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. This is conformity to God. We are required to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God; and in so doing we are reconciled to him.

But says our opposer, what if we do not conform to these divine requirements? it makes no difference, if God loves all men, wills that all should be saved, and does not impute our trespasses to us. Reply; Our reconciliation to God, and our conformity to his will and all his requirements is the salvation which our heavenly Father wills for us; it is the life which Jesus came to give to the world; it is heaven, it is joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. This doctrine is the doctrine of divine love, this love is a fountain of living waters, it is that river whose streams make glad the city of our God.

LECTURE XII.

ALL MEN DRAWN TO CHRIST.

JOHN xii. 32.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

As the time drew near that the Lord of glory, the mediator of the new covenant should seal his testament with his blood, there came to his disciples certain Greeks, and said to Philip, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip and Andrew communicate this request, to their master, who in room of either consenting to their request, or of refusing, replied saying, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

These Greeks, being Gentiles, were not the subjects of the ministry of Jesus in the days of his flesh, but as soon as he should be put to death in the flesh and be quickened by the Spirit, then would the gospel be preached to the Gentiles. Therefore when he was told that certain Greeks desired to see him, he spoke of his being glorified in sending his gospel to them. He was the corn of weat that abode alone until it fell into the ground and died; but after it died and was quickened it brought forth much fruit, "even judgment unto the Gentiles." The Saviour proceeded to speak of his sufferings, saying; "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, *glorify* thy name. Then came there a voice from

heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said, that it thundered: others said, an angel spoke to him. Jesus answered and said, this voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Here again it seems evident, that the Redeemer had special allusion to the request of the Greeks. As if he had said; I must die; I must be lifted up upon the cross; I must be laid in the silent house of death; I must rise from the dead, bring life and immortality to light through the gospel; then, not only these few Greeks shall be permitted to see me, but I will send forth to the fulness of the Gentiles, and finally to the Jews, the ministry of reconciliation by which I will "draw all men unto me."

A few arguments will now be directed to prove, that all men are the subjects of the Redeemer's grace. This point of doctrine is now before the public mind, and more than any other invites the attention of all denominations. It is true, those who preach a contrary creed, endeavor as much as possible to postpone the consideration of this subject, and they use all the influence which they can possibly bring to act on the public mind, to turn the attention of the people from a candid examination of it. However, it very frequently happens, that the efforts which are designed to prevent people from looking into these things excite their curiosity and incite them more to the examination than if nothing was said or done. If it were a crime for the rulers of the Jews to associate with the Saviour and attend on his instruction; if excommunication awaited those who should profess Christ openly, there was the night season, when the enemies of the Redeemer were either locked up in sleep, or perhaps in superstitious conclave, scoffing at the benign doctrine, of grace and concerting more severe measures to prevent its spread, when a Nicodemus, could go, unnoticed to Jesus and obtain a knowledge of salvation. If the wisdom of

this world be crafty enough to employ gentle, soothing, and persuasive measures to quiet the people in that cold cruel system of partiality and endless misery, it is only like jogging the cradle to quiet the child, while its cries increase with its want of nourishment.

This doctrine of universal salvation, which we propose to prove in this discourse, seems to be favored by the dictates of sound reason, and fully supported by the evidences derived from the nature of the manifest economy of universal providence.

If we could do ourselves the justice to lay aside all the prejudices of our mistaught minds, and open our eyes to the light of reason, and our ears to the voice of enlightened understanding, we should soon find our minds engaged in the sweet contemplations of the impartial goodness of the Supreme Ruler.

The same creative power gave existence to all men, all are blessed by the same munificent providence, the sun that makes and rules the day, the moon that rules the night discovers no partiality in dispensing their favors. Do not the rains fall, and the dews descend as common blessings on mankind? Is not the vital air, is not the fulness of the waters the undivided inheritance of mankind? Is there an element, is there a vegetable, is there a fruit which nature reserves from the general store-house of him, who opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing?

Let us contemplate the unity of our common nature, the dependence of one on another, and that eternal indissoluble law by which we are united. Notwithstanding there is an infinite variety among mankind, there is no distinction of moral nature; nor is there a genio in the whole family of man that the philosopher can prove to be useless and of no advantage to others. Those who are considered to be the most useful members of community frequently owe their means to be so, to them, who being placed in the low walks of life, are scarcely known in society. What would kings be without subjects? what would rulers be destitute of people? Are not servants as profitable in their stations, as their masters are in theirs? and are

not the rich and the poor blessings to each other? The sacred connexions of husband and wife, of parents and children, of brethren and sisters, if duly contemplated, furnish a most delightful prospect of the dependences of our common nature. In fact it seems that mankind forms one compact, indissoluble body, which may be represented by the human frame, which can lose none of its members without being rendered maimed and incomplete.

It is true the partial system has driven men of discerning minds to make calculations, that the eternal separation of those, who are in this life united by the tenderest ties of our nature, and the indescribable misery of children will occasion an increase of the parent's happiness, and the endless misery of parents will greatly increase the felicity of children in the eternal world. But it must be acknowledged that such arguments are equally as hostile to every good quality of man, as the system which they are designed to defend is to reason and revelation. We say, that men of discerning minds have been driven to argue thus, for they can discern, that unless this be the case, what they call heaven will be a place of the keenest mental torment, that can be conceived of. Losing sight of nature and of nature's God, and adhearing to their partial creed, many contend, that at what they call the great day, parents will rejoice to see their offspring turned away into the burning lake, while other instances will occur, in which children will sing praises to God in the highest a seeing their parents, the inheriters of unspeakable misery.

If we can suppress our indignation against such unhallowed cruelty, so as to take a deliberate view of a faint simile we may suppose that the sweet slumbers of a numerous family are suddenly interrupted by the midnight cry of fire. They are roused from sleep amid the smoke and flames of their own dwelling; the father and several of the eldest children but just make their escape from the devouring element, and leave the wife and mother with a number of the children to perish in the flames. Now observe, the doctrine which

stands opposed to the salvation of all men, and which can support itself at no less expense then to enhance the felicities of heaven by the miseries of hell, supposes that the happiness of the husband and father, on finding himself safe from the fire, is to be increased by his seeing the companion of his bosom, the mother of his children, and her little ones in the flames, and by hearing their lamentable cries; and these children who made their escape are to possess hearts to rejoice to see the mother that watched over their infancy and childhood, and their brothers and sisters perishing in the most excruciating anguish.

To wound your feelings with such a simile as this, on any ordinary subject would surely require an apology, but in respect to the subject under consideration our simile is as dim as the faint glimmer of a dying taper compared with the concentrated blaze of a thousand suns. The flames that destroyed the unhappy victims were merciful to terminate their sufferings in a moment, that nothing but the remembrance of the sad catastrophe might remain, but the flames of hell and its "lively bright horrors" are supposed to exist eternally, to gladden kindred hearts, and to brighten the joys of relative spirits forever and ever!

To the eye of candid reason, it seems perfectly clear, that to make an eternal separation of the human family, and to place one part in a state of everlasting misery, would render the whole miserable, let the line of separation be drawn in one place or another. If the division be made according to the doctrine of partial election, without any regard to the conduct of men, the husband may be chosen, and the wife a reprobate; in another case the wife may be chosen, and the husband a reprobate: And this dividing line will separate parents from their children, and children from each other, and it is as plain as any thing can be that if one company is appointed to a state of misery the other must be.

You that are parents, you who are brothers and sisters are called on to judge of this question. Suppose your nearest and dearest connexions, as children and

brethren were prisoners in an enemy's land, and you were certified by letters from them, that they were treated in the most cruel manner; their lodging the cold damp ground, their food scant and unwholesome, and that there were no hopes of their ever being released, could you be happy? Without the least commiseration could you repose on your beds of down, and feast yourselves at your sumptuous tables? All this you know to be impossible.

Or suppose this final separation is to be made with due reference to the works of men in this world, this alters not the case, for we cannot be happy while our connexions suffer even for their faults.

If we draw a reasonable conclusion from the manifest goodness of God to all men, in his temporal providence, and if we assist this conclusion by the considerations already suggested of the unity and dependence of our nature, we must decide in favor of the proposition for which we contend; for it is most unreasonable indeed to suppose, that the system of the Redeemer's grace, which derives its origin from the same source, from whence came every principle of our existence and every favor of divine providence, is less benevolent in its designs or less efficacious in its means.

We may now notice some of the evidences, which support the doctrine of universal grace, found in the divine testimony. We say some of the evidences, because it would require much time, and superior abilities to those employed on this occasion to bring the whole of this sort of evidence into view. Indeed we must be very limited on this part of our subject that we may avoid using too many of the passages already recited in these lectures for the same purpose, and that the hearer's patience be not too much burdened.

The text under consideration may first be noticed. In this passage Jesus promises to draw *all men* unto himself. And his testimony concerning those who come to him is as follows: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." By this passage it

is evident, that by coming to him, and by believing on him, Jesus meant the same thing. He farther says; "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out—No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

By these passages we learn, that the instructions and the drawings of the Father, are the only means by which men can come to Christ. They furthermore teach us, that those who are, by such means, drawn to the Saviour will not be cast off. Thus the evidence issues in a most direct confirmation of the proposition to be proved.

St. Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy says, that God "will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." And Jesus said; "I came down from heaven; not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Suppose one of you own an hundred sheep, and they all break from your enclosure and go astray, they all enter into your neighbour's pasture. In room of sending them home, he endeavors to retain them, and uses all possible means to prevent their return. You direct your shepherd to go and seek and save that which is lost. You tell him, that it is your will that he returns the whole; the shepherd is told by your enemy who retains your flock that he will give up a few of the sheep, but must keep the greatest part. The shepherd replies; I have not come to negociate for the sheep, I have come to do the will of him that sent me. How can this will be done and yet but a few of these sheep return?

The will of God is further expressed by St. Paul, as follows; "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." Again he says;

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." And furthermore he says: "For it pleaseth the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, (and having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven." To these we may subjoin the passage we treated of in our last lecture; "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God: for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." If the hearer will allow these and concurrent passages their natural agreement and signification they must be considered sufficient evidence to prove that the design of the Saviour's grace is the salvation of all men.

Another argument in favor of our proposition, and which is thought to be sufficient of itself to establish it, is drawn from the revealed fact that it is consistent with the holiness of God for him to love sinners and to bestow the greatest possible favors upon them. The scripture informs us that "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And again; "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Now if it be consistent with the holiness of God for him to love those who are dead in sin, and to commend his love to such by the death of *Christ for them,* and to quicken them togeth-

er with Christ, it proves beyond all controversy that sin is no objection to God's granting his grace and salvation to men. Standing in the light of this glorious truth, and feeling the life of the spirit of this grace, who can be so hard-hearted as to sentence millions of their fellow sinners to endless darkness and wo? In this spirit of love and grace it seems the divine Redeemer stood, when he said; "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." It is granted on all hands, that God can never change; he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Yesterday and to-day he was and is the friend and lover of sinners. How then is it possible that he should ever cease to love these beings and to do them good?

This argument provokes the Pharisee to start the old trite objection, that the doctrine leads to licentiousness. This objection, though it has been fairly removed hundreds of times, will never leave the world as long as a Pharisee remains in it. If the manifestation of the divine love to sinners have a natural tendency to encourage them in sin, why did God commend his love unto us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us? Why are those blessings of the divine Providence, to which the Saviour adverted for proof that God loves his enemies, continually, and with such profusion scattered down upon us? Are we serving the cause of religion and moral virtue by persuading people to believe that the goodness of God naturally leads men to sin. My brethren, should you believe me your friend if I persuaded your children to the opinion, that if you love them, notwithstanding their faults, it is no matter what they do, and that it is even better for them to violate all your wholesome laws, and to treat your advice and admonitions with contempt? Surely if there be any such thing as a heinous sin in our world, we have it here under consideration. Because our heavenly Father gives us life and all the numerous blessings of life must we improve all his favors to dye our souls in the crimson of sin? Because Jesus hath loved us and given himself for us, *is there* no way we can act like reasonable beings only

by hating him and disobeying his commands? O ingratitude! legitimate child of the Pharisee, retire, cold and unfeeling, to the frosty bosom from whence thou hast come.

It has already been suggested, that by coming unto Christ is meant, being taught of God and believing in Christ. and this was seen by the words of Christ; and this was seen by the words of Christ in the 6th of John, which have been quoted. They therefore, who come to Jesus, come to him in their understanding; they receive him as their prophet to teach them, their priest, who offered himself for the sinner, without spot unto God, and as a king to rule them. The blessings enjoyed in consequence of coming to Christ are expressed in his most gracious words, recorded in Matt. xi.; "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." How lovely does the Saviour appear in his gracious invitations and promises. He invites all to come to him; he promises to draw all men to him; he promises to give them all rest and an easy service; he promises that he will in no wise cast any out.

Well did the dear Redeemer say; "I will *draw* all men unto me. The doctrine of Jesus is perfectly calculated to *draw* men. It holds up to view those virtues and those advantages which are powerful attractions. In the passage just recited, those who are heavy laden are promised rest. What can be more inviting to any who have for a long time labored under an intolerable burden, than an opportunity to cast it off, and to enjoy rest? Suppose men were in bondage and hard servitude, as were the Israelites in Egypt, oppressed with severe taskmasters and made to serve with the most cruel rigor; and a humane, benevolent prince should ransom them all, and invite them into his country, where they should have all things they wanted without money and without price, where no law *but the perfect* law of liberty exists, where they

would have no service to perform but such in which they should have perfect delight and freedom, would not a clear manifestation of these facts *draw* them away from the tyrant to their kind deliverer and Saviour? Would it be necessary to threaten them, and preach up terror to them? Would it be proper to tell them that the person who had ransomed them would come and put them to the most cruel tortures if they did not immediately enter into his service? Under all these circumstances, would it be necessary to tell these miserable wretches, that it is true their present services are very light, merely nothing in comparison with the service of the prince who had purchased them, but then this prince would punish them all with the most cruel tortures if they should not enter his service without delay? If any thing could possibly operate to deceive these redeemed ones, and to keep them in slavery it must be some such deceit. As certain as they should be made to believe such falsehoods, they would make nice calculations not to go into the hated service any sooner than just to escape the tortures threatened. But suppose they should go to this person in consequence of these threatenings, they would not be *drawn*, they would be *driven*. Jesus did not say, I will *drive* all men to me. If we were to judge by some preaching that we hear, we should suppose the preachers were sent to *drive* us to heaven, in the greatest haste too, for fear our Redeemer would destroy us?

The Saviour says in the 6th of John, as before quoted; "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger." What is more drawing to the destitute, foodless poor than the gladsome news of bread, without money and without price? Suppose such a famine as was in Egypt and all the countries round about it should visit the United States, the provisions of the land, after the most prudent measures had been taken, is nearly exhausted, pale hunger makes its appearance on all faces, and the wisest know of no relief; at this awful crisis a large fleet from a foreign *country* arrives with vast quantities of bread as a pres-

ent to us! how would it draw the people. In what crowds would they rush along the streets; how would every eye and every countenance brighten with gladness. In such a circumstance as this what should we think of a man who should come forward and say; "I am sent by the monarch who has sent you bread, to warn you to apply immediately for his bounty that you may escape his vengeance? And what should we think of the people who should spend their time to hear these terrors proclaimed? In such a time of favor and rejoicing, would it be seemly to stop the hungry and tell them they have no right to the free bounty that has arrived unless they really believe in this act of goodness? Would it be thought indispensably necessary to have a creed written, with well studied articles to the number of thirty-nine, for the people all to learn by heart before they should be allowed to taste the bread of life? Would it be treating those, who were fainting for want of food, according to the benevolent designs of the gracious donor of these ample provisions, to prevent their receiving this unpurchased, unconditional favor, by suggesting conditions, terms, and articles of faith to be complied with and believed? Suppose the articles are all made out according to the wisdom of him, who urges their necessity, but the people cannot understand them. Some are mysterious, some are in direct opposition to others; one explains them in one way; and another explains them in another way, many profess to believe them because they are told that they cannot obtain favor unless they do. Those who should believe in this case might believe themselves to death, and close their eyes without seeing the salvation which mercy had sent them: others, whose minds should revolt at a creed which contains contradictions, would be turned away as unbelievers, and fare no better than those who believe.

Jesus says; "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." The unfortunate, who have suffered hunger and thirst in sultry climes, inform us the want of drink *is vastly more* severe than the want of food

Here then the merciful Saviour makes use of a simile which gives the most striking idea of his goodness. Of a number of faint, weary, hungry, and thirsty pilgrims, on burning sands, if one should cry out to his fellows, here is water! How quickly would it draw them all together.

The prophet Isaiah, speaking of Jesus, says; "A man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as a river of water in a dry place: as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." How very inviting, how attracting how drawing are the favors here noticed. The beasts of the field and the fowls of the air seek these favors. When storms and winds beat on them, they seek a shelter; when they are thirsty you find them by the streams; and when a sultry sun is vehement you find them in the shade. Do you ask what these things mean? Do you inquire how you can obtain so great a favor? The word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth. Jesus is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. To be drawn to Christ is to be drawn into wisdom, whose ways are pleasantness and all her paths are peace. It is to be drawn into righteousness, which is heaven. It is to be drawn into sanctification, which is holiness. It is to be drawn into redemption, which is freedom from the law of sin and death. O Jesus, how great is thy promise! Thou wilt draw all men unto thyself. Then shall every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all which are in them; say, blessing and honnor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

LECTURE XIII.

CHRIST SOWING THE GOOD SEED, IN TEARS.

PSALM cxxvi. 6.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

DIVINE wisdom has seen fit, that the commencement of those affairs which are designed to terminate in great and extensive blessings to mankind, should be distinguished for the hardships, painful labors, extreme difficulties, privations, uncommon sufferings, sorrow and tears which attend them. This remark will be found to be, generally, appropriate, whether applied to political or religious concerns, and is often justified by the experience of individuals. This sentiment seems symbolically expressed in our text and its introduction. To represent the reverse of condition which Zion experienced by a deliverance from captivity, the prophet says; "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

From the scanty portion of grain, on which the husbandman depends to bread his dependent family, he takes a selected portion, and having with much labor prepared *his field, he* commits the precious seed to the

bosom of the earth. His fears anticipate drought, blasts, and mildews; his hope endures, as seeing things that are invisible, and looks forward to the time when heaven shall reward his toils with a joyful harvest, and return him thirty, sixty or an hundred fold. The autumn comes and brings the golden harvest, and plenty calls for songs of grafitude and joy. But to the eye of inexperience how mysterious would this appear. The portion of bread corn is already scant, and the husband of a numerous family takes part of this and buries it in the earth. It appears as an unreasonable waste. Thus we frequently judge of the ways of divine Providence; and are led to say, if God were good to his creatures, why should such and such things be permitted to wound our tenderest feelings? Why should such sorrows be sent as the inheritance of the oppressed, the innocent, and the defenceless? Not being able to see the end from the beginning of events, we are often misguided in judgment, and entertain doubts of the divine goodness towards us. But could we comprehend the mysterious wisdom of God by which he turns every thing to the good of hir creatures, causing light afflictions, which are but for a moment, to work for us an exceeding weight of glory, we should at once conclude, that the measure of evil endured by the creatures of God, is as nothing when compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us, and which can be traced back to those afflictions, which, during their continuance, were grievous.

These introductory observation seem to lead the mind into an extensive field, where an infinite variety of objects invite our attention to the contemplation of the wisdom and goodness of God, in causing light to shine out of darkness, order to grow out of what appears to us confusion, peace of mind from sorrow of heart, tranquillity out of trouble, prosperity out of adversity, in a word, good from what we call evil, strength from weakness and glory from shame. But keeping in mind that proper limits must bound the labors of a lecture, the audience is invited to contemplate our subject as manifested in the Saviour of mankind.

Jesus went forth in our world weeping, bearing and sowing precious seed, and he shall doubtless come again, rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. He sowed in tears, he shall reap in joy; he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

Our first inquiry will be directed to notice the occasion of our Saviour's tears.

Jesus was possessed of the sensibilities and sympathies of our nature in their purity and perfection, which caused him to feel the afflictions of the afflicted, the sorrows of the sorrowful, and the distress of the distressed. Many proofs of this are found in the history of the Saviour. We may notice him at Bethany, where he raised Lazarus from the dead. Notwithstanding he knew what he was about to do, and that Lazarus would in a few minutes be a living man, to the astonishment and joy of his weeping sisters, such was the tenderness of his heart that when he saw the Jews, who had come to comfort the bereaved sisters, weeping, and the two disconsolate sisters weeping, he himself groaned in spirit, and wept with them. Let those who mourn remember this, and realize that their sorrows are duly noticed by him who is the resurrection and the life, who hath the keys of hell and death. That power of life and salvation, which gloriously triumphed at the tomb of him who had been dead four days, is still the same, and has given assurance, that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

On that most joyful occasion of the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, riding upon an ass, when the people in vast multitudes welcomed the King of Zion, and praised God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest; the blessed Jesus, in room of being elated with these tokens of submission and expressions of joy—in room of participating the exceeding gladness of the people, his mind seemed intent on a very different subject, the account of which is as follows: "*And when he* came near he beheld the city,

and wept over it saying, if thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

Having a clear view of the sword, the famine and the pestilence which would surely come on Jerusalem, and knowing that the youth who were then in the days of their innocence, would be the sufferers in this calamity, the Saviour was deeply affected, and wept.

Suppose you, who love the town of Boston for a thousand reasons, which we have not time to name, should be certified by a divine communication, that this metropolis should, within forty years, suffer all the dreadful calamities of a long siege, attended with famine and pestilence, with factions within, which should waste the strength and the blood of the inhabitants, until the place should be given up to an enraged enemy, that should have no mercy on those who should fall into their hands, could your eyes look on the stately, magnificent buildings, knowing they would all be leveled with the ground, could they behold the lovely youth, who now make such a charming appearance in these streets and churches, without weeping? Such was the occasion of those tears which the compassionate Jesus shed over the devoted city of his father David. He looked on that pride and joy of the earth, he beheld the temple of God, that wonder of the world, he knew that the time of their destruction was within that generation; his gracious eyes beheld the lovely youth whose thousands then adorned the venerable habitations of their ancestors, and knew that they would be the distressed sufferers in the calamities to which that nation and city were appointed.

When he was going to Calvary to suffer death

from the wicked hands of the people, who by their persecutions of him and his disciples were filling up the measure of their sins, he was evidently more concerned for the sufferings that people were bringing on themselves and on their children, than for what he himself was about to endure. When he saw the great company of people, and of women, who followed him lamenting his fate, he turned and said unto them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming in the which they shall say, blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, fall on us, and to the hills, cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

If the hearer will indulge a digression in this place, liberty will be taken to remark on two particulars. First, it does not appear, from the Saviour's speech here recited, that his own sufferings were of that kind or degree that has been represented by christian doctors. They have supposed that the sufferings of Christ were far beyond any possible comparison, even greater than we can conceive, and that this rendered them efficacious with his Father to procure our pardon of sin. Now if his sufferings were so immense, why should he represent to the daughters of Jerusalem that they had more reason to weep for themselves and their children, than for him?

Secondly, it does not appear that the Saviour thought of the subject, which has been the weighty burden of those minds, who have consigned the inhabitants of Jerusalem to everlasting misery in the future world; for he spake of nothing but of their sufferings in this life. If it had been known to Jesus, that all the sufferings which that people was appointed to endure in the destructions that he denounced upon them, were nothing in comparison with what they must suffer in another world, why did he, when he wept over Jerusalem, speak of the destruction of that city and its inhabitants *by the hand* of their enemies, and neglect

to say any thing on the subject of their future sufferings, which were to be infinitely greater? The candor of the hearer will do justice to these remarks, while we return to our subject.

The prophet Isaiah represents our Saviour a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He grieved and wept for the afflictions and sufferings of mankind; he felt the woes of human nature; he bore their sicknesses and carried their sorrows, but the angel of his presence upheld him; he was touched with the feelings of all our infirmities.

The superstition, the bigotry, and the traditions of the people wherewith they made void the law of God, and the hardness of their hearts were a peculiar cause of his grief. Such was their blindness that his miracles could not open their eyes; and such was the hardness of their hearts that his love, pity and mercy did not soften them. What stubborn, unyielding and forbidding ground was this! There was but here and there a spot where the precious seed that he sowed could be received into good ground, and promise a future harvest.

We may now direct our attention to inquire what seed the Saviour sowed, and to ascertain its precious qualities.

In the 13th chapter of Matthew, Jesus represents himself as a sower, who went forth to sow; "And, when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up they were scorched; and, because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them. But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold." In the same chapter he says; "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." Again, he signifies that by seed he means the "word of the kingdom." And *furthermore* he represents the kingdom of heaven by

"a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field." It is evident by these scripture, that Jesus represented his doctrine by "good seed." The doctrine of Christ is, therefore, our present subject.

Here it is worthy of notice, that the great teacher sent of God, though he taught a doctrine which was very different from that which was taught by the doctors of his day, was never the author of a set of articles of faith called a creed. And it is likewise of importance to notice, that in this, his Apostles faithfully followed his example. The work of framing creeds is the invention of men.

Jesus founded his doctrine and all he came to do, on the divine character and will of his Father. He said; "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will; but the will of him that sent me.——God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.——The Son of man came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.——The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

By these precious sayings of Jesus we are certified that God is merciful to sinners, wills their salvation, and sent his Son for this very purpose.

In the 5th of Matthew, Jesus sets forth his precious doctrine in the plainest terms possible, as follows; "I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

By this most precious testimony we are assured that our Father who is in heaven loves his enemies; and we are *furthermore* certified that we are required to

do the same. How many articles of faith is it necessary to arrange, in order to comprehend this subject? How long is it necessary for a good scholar and a bright genius to spend at a theological school in order to understand this doctrine? It pains the speaker to the heart, that he is obliged to say, that theological schools are employed in teaching youth how to evade the plain testimony of Jesus, and how to keep the people from receiving it.

In the 15th of Luke, the Saviour sets forth his doctrine of salvation in three parables. He was induced to do this in reply to the Pharisees and Scribes, who murmured at him because he received sinners and ate with them. In the first parable he represents sinners and their salvation by a lost sheep, which the owner seeks, finds, and carries home; in the second, by a piece of money which a woman lost, sought and found. He furthermore represents the angels in heaven rejoicing more over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance; and in the last he sets forth the return of sinners to God by the return of the prodigal son to his father.

This sower of the precious seed of the kingdom of God, was particular in planting the doctrine of the divine goodness; and in order to hand it to us in the most acceptable manner, he says; "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

Nothing can be more evident, than that our heavenly Father is more kind to us, who are evil, than we are to our children, according to this precious testimony of our Saviour. This is precious seed in very deed. It is precious beyond all comparison. This declaration of him, who went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, is of more value than all the bodies of divinity which have been written since the enemy sowed tares among the wheat.

Let us ask ourselves, notwithstanding we are evil, *and too* frequently err in our conduct towards our

children, could we possibly consign our dependent offspring to endless torments for their childish faults? And yet such is the common doctrine taught by the creeds of men, that little children are instructed to repeat sentences which teach them to believe that their heavenly Father will torture millions of his creatures, in never ending misery! How painful is the thought, that such a sentiment should be imprinted in the tender minds of our innocent children, concerning whom Jesus said; "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." O how precious is this kind declaration of the Saviour, to parents! This is the testimony of him, who is now at the right hand of God. Compare these words of Jesus with the popular doctrine of the total depravity of infants, and of hell's containing millions of them, who never saw the light of the sun!

Such is the vast importance of the comparison here suggested, that the candid attention of the audience is invited to consider the following question; If the testimony of Jesus concerning little children be both true and precious, is not the opinion that little children are totally depraved, and are heirs of eternal misery, false and impure? This false doctrine belongs to the tares, which the enemy sowed among the wheat. Jesus never sowed such seed; he never uttered any thing so dishonorable to God, nor did he ever plant such a thorn to torture the feelings of affectionate parents. The doctrine of Jesus is the doctrine of love. The doctrines of men are the doctrines of hatred. The doctrine of Jesus teaches that God loves his enemies, wills their salvation, and sent his Son to save them. The doctrines of men teach that God hates his enemies and will punish them eternally. The doctrine of Jesus informs us that he came to call sinners to repentance. The doctrines of men assert that the finally impenitent will be made forever miserable, but Jesus never spake of the "finally impenitent." The doctrine of Jesus teaches the forgiveness of sin. The doctrines of men require a sacrifice to appease the divine wrath. The doctrine of *Jesus informs* us, that he will draw all men

unto himself. The doctrines of men assert, that God has decreed but a part to be drawn to Christ. The doctrine of Jesus informs us that all things are given to him. The doctrines of men assert, that but a few are given to Christ. The doctrine of Jesus is precious wheat; but the doctrines of men are tares which are to be consumed by the fire of truth and love.

There are several particulars respecting the preciousness of the doctrine of Jesus, which are worthy of special notice; some of which we shall here mention.

First. This doctrine is from God. Jesus says; "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." The Creator, Ruler and Disposer of all things has sent us a communication of his divine will and fixed purpose concerning us. This doctrine being from the highest authority in the universe must be considered precious.

Secondly. In all respects, this doctrine is most favorable to mankind. There is no particular part that can be altered for the better. Let the most wise and prudent undertake to add any thing to this doctrine and they make it worse. Let them take any thing from it and they leave it not so good.

Thirdly. It is most precious on account of its simplicity and perspicuity. It is rendered so visible in the divine testimony, that any attempt to explain it tends to render it obscure. If one should attempt to show us the sun in a clear day by holding a candle before our eyes, it would obscure our vision, and tend to hide from our sight what is already as visible as it can be. Such are the effects of the wisdom of this world when employed to show us that light which shines in the "face of Jesus."

Fourthly. This doctrine of the New-Testament is life. It is the bread of God which giveth life to the world. St. Paul says; "God hath made us able ministers of the New-Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." There is no death in the doctrine of Jesus. *Peter said;* "thou hast the words of eternal life."

Fifthly, It is universal. It is the same to all men. Jesus has but one doctrine for every creature under heaven; and this doctrine is calculated to gather together all things in one, even in Christ. There is no particular view of the doctrine of Jesus, in which it appears more precious, than in its universality. Though the sun be most precious in its light and heat even to an individual, how glorious is the thought that this light and this heat are universal. And though these life-giving qualities are dispensed through every degree of latitude and longitude round the globe, every one has enough. So it is with that "true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." If a few astronomers, who should study the laws of the heavenly bodies, should frame a creed embracing the most essential particulars in the phenomena of the sun, and then require every one, learned and unlearned, to believe in their creed as a condition by which they might obtain its light, they would discover as much true philosophy as those, who stile themselvs divines, do of divinity, in framing their creeds, and requiring our assent to them, that we may obtain the favour of God.

Sixthly, This doctrine is most precious, because it is always the same. It is now what it was in the beginning, it is now what it will be when thousands of ages shall have passed away. The same love, the same mercy, the same good will of our heavenly Father, in which the most enlightened now rejoice, have, in all ages of the world, been in full exercise towards mankind; nor can they ever relax, but will forever continue.

And seventhly, This precious doctrine of the love of God is calculatd to transform every rational being into its own nature and to render every man precious like itself. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.——Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know, that when he appeareth we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." In this way the fruits of the precious doctrine of the Saviour will

finally produce the joyful harvest contemplated in our text, and will load, with ripe sheaves, the blessed Redeemer of the world, who in sorrow went forth and sowed his precious seed.

When the fulness of the different times, which intervene between seed-time and harvest, have passed away, and the hand of labor is abundantly rewarded with a plenteous harvest, then the husbandman realizes the end of his toils, and comes from his field, rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. So, when the fulness of times shall have passed away, for the perfecting of the work of the gospel ministry, he that sowed in tears shall reap in joy. All shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest; and the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

As the husbandman, who commits the precious wheat to the bosom of the earth, and waits for the early and the latter rains, receives to his full satisfaction the plenteous harvest, so we are certified that Jesus shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. O the blessed assurance! Shall Jesus, who sowed in tears reap as large a harvest as will fill his vast desires? Yes, "for by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Jesus "gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time." He will never be satisfied until his "ransomed shall all return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Every convert to God, every ransomed soul that returns and comes to Zion, brings a ripe sheaf of the precious grain of love to God and love to man, which Jesus sowed in tears. It should be distinctly understood, that the design of the Saviour in sowing the good seed in the world, was that it might bring forth the fruit of righteousness.

Here then let us examine the argument which the doctrine of limited salvation urges against the final happiness of all men. The argument is this; It is not

right in the sight of God, to bestow the same felicity on the wicked, as he does on the righteous. This is our opposer's argument, but we say it does not, in the least, affect the merits of the subject. This objection only shows that the opposer is totally ignorant of what he endeavors to disprove. The question is, is it just and right in the sight of God to bring sinners to repentance, and convert the ungodly to holiness? This is the question, and our opposer ought to understand it; for if he could see that, in order to disprove the doctrine for which we contend, he must show that it is not right to convert the sinner to God, he would cease to oppose.

Jesus said, as has been before noticed, "that he came to call sinners to repentance." St. Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." But let us keep in mind, that Jesus saves his people from their sins; not in their sins, as our opposers seem to insinuate that we believe.

There are two particulars respecting the harvest under consideration, which may be distinctly noticed.

First. The quality of the grain to be gathered in. This is righteousness. "Such as a man sows, such shall he also reap." Jesus sowed the doctrine of love, of faith, of repentance, of hope, of charity, of forgiveness, of doing to others as we would that they should do to us; such will he reap. Had he sown the doctrine of eternal hatred, final impenitence, endless enmity, death and condemnation, he would expect to reap a harvest of the same kind. Those who preach such doctrines now, expect to see such a harvest, and they very often speak of the tremendous day, when the ripe sheaves will be gathered in. But who will come rejoicing bringing in such a harvest?

Secondly. The extent of the harvest is a subject that claims our notice. Jesus represented the future extent of his doctrine, by the parable of the mustard-seed, "which a man took and sowed in his field;

which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becomes a tree; so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Also, by the parable of the leaven, "which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." There is a beautiful indication of the same in the 72d Psalm, as follows: "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon; and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Isaiah says, "Thy people shall be all righteous." And speaking of the Prince of Peace, he says; "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." David says, "All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him—All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the governor among the nations." This extensive harvest was seen by St. John, on the isle of Patmos, as he thus describes: "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." This is the rejoicing of the extensive harvest. And though this vast multitude of all nations, &c. were seen together, there were "white robes" enough for them all.

My hearers—You were all seen in this vision; the robe of righteousness is ready for you. The time will come when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Though the mustard-seed was despised when the Saviour planted it, and though it lie a long time in the earth, its glory will unfold, and its increase shall

satisfy the capacious desires of him who came to call sinners to repentance.

Dr. Watts says;

"Though seed lie buried long in dust,
It shan't deceive their hope!
The precious grain can ne'er be lost,
For grace insures the crop"

LECTURE XIV.

ENTERING INTO LIFE MAIMED; AND BEING CAST INTO HELL.

MARK ix. 43, 44.

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Some of the motives which have inclined the speaker to call the attention of this audience to the consideration of this portion of divine truth are the following:

1. There is, perhaps, no passage in the scriptures, that has been more commonly used to lead the minds of people to believe in the doctrine of endless misery, and to be exercised with the fear of such a state, than this. And as one of the objects of these lectures is to disprove such a doctrine, and to show that the passages, which are usually quoted in its support, are misapplied, it seems proper to notice this passage in a way to show the error of its common use. And,

2. That the opportunity may be embraced to enforce the argument of the text to induce the mind to submit to any privations, which are necessary to the discharge of that christian obedience by which we enter into the spiritual life of the spirit of truth.

We may, in the first place, institute an inquiry, directed to satisfy the mind respecting the usual application of this scripture to a future state of endless misery.

In giving to this inquiry such a form as may tend to

facilitate a judicious conclusion, the following things are premised;

1. The testimony, by which any fact is to be proved, should be of one who knows the thing to be a reality, to which he bears such testimony.

2. In a case where testimony is all the evidence that can be had, this testimony should be of such a character as to admit of no reasonable doubt respecting its true application.

3. It is indispensable, that testimony, by which the belief of any proposition is to be established should be entirely free from any contradictions. And,

4. It is moreover proper to observe, that in proportion to the greatness of the subject, on which we are called to form a judgment, what has been premised enforces its claims on the mind.

As to the magnitude of the subject, which is now called in question, nothing exceeds it. The doctrine which asserts, that mankind are to suffer unspeakable torments to all future eternity is a subject, that justly requires as direct and clear evidence as any nameable case whatever.

With the foregoing considerations impressed on our minds, let us examine the words of our text with the design to ascertain the truth concerning this vast question. "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."—This is the testimony on which the doctrine of eternal, never-ending misery is founded. The hearer is most earnestly requested to lay aside all prepossession on this subject, and investigate it with as much caution as the interest which we all have in the subject demands.

1. Let us ask, is there in this passage any thing that goes to prove that its author was speaking of what is to take place in a future state of being? Most certainly, without a doubt, replies the believer in endless punishment, for Jesus here speaks of being cast *into hell; and surely hell* is not in this world. My

dear friend, I humbly asked you to lay aside all prepossessions on this subject; but in room of this, your answer is the production of prejudice. Did this faithful and true witness ever say that hell is not in this world? Is it asserted in our text, that this hell is in a future state of existence? Both these questions must be answered in the negative. Will our opposer say, that the whole testimony of scripture must be admitted in this case, and that we must learn where hell is, and what it is, by the united testimony of inspired writers? To this we agree at once. The prophet David says; "Great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell." Again he says; "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow." Jonah says; I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." Now as certain as David and Jonah were in this world, when they thus spake, so certain it is, that in the days of these prophets, hell was in this world. Why might it not be in this world in the days our Saviour was on the earth?

It appears evident, from the passages just quoted, that a state of extreme trouble and affliction is, in the language of scripture, called hell. Therefore, in order to justify the application of this word to a state of punishment in a future world, there must be a declaration directly to that effect; but there is no part of the text under consideration that can in any way answer such a purpose.

2. Will it be contended, that as the Saviour said; "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," he must necessarily mean to speak of a future endless torment? To this we reply; as it has already been agreed, that the scriptures must be taken in their connexion, and their united testimony admitted in this inquiry, it seems most proper to connect these words of our Saviour with a similar passage in the 66th of Isaiah, which reads thus; "For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I have made, shall *remain* before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed

and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

By this passage the case is perfectly clear that the worm, and the fire that is not quenched are in this state of existence, where times of worship are measured by new moons and by sabbaths. And there can be no doubt but the Saviour, in our text had his eye on this passage in Isaiah, and spake of the same subject.

We will now allow the objector liberty to say, that it is evident that the passage in Isaiah alludes to the time of the new heavens, and the new earth, which must refer to a future state.

We reply to the objector, in this case, and say; "Ye greatly err, not knowing the scriptures;" for the prophet in his 65th chapter speaks as follows; "Behold I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy—And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." Will houses be built, and vineyards be planted in a future world? No; all these scriptures evidently regard things which belong to our present state of mortal existence.

By a careful comparison of the passages to which we have referred, and by taking into the connexion one in St. Peter, and another in Revelations, on the subject of the new heavens, and new earth, and on the new Jerusalem, it appears clear that those scriptures were designed to represent the gospel dispensation. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, who understood the language of Isaiah, says to the believers in Jesus; "Ye are come *unto mount* Zion, and unto the city of

the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." He does not say, that they will get to this heavenly Jerusalem in a future world, but he tells them, that that they have already come to it.

But what does Isaiah mean by saying; "They shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh?"

Reply—By all flesh, no doubt, the prophet meant the Gentiles of different nations who should come into the gospel church and covenant; and by the men that transgressed against the Lord, he meant the Jews who rejected their Messiah. These Jews are represented as tormented with a gnawing worm and a perpetual fire, and to be an abhorring to the Christian church of Gentiles.

These remarks seem to bring us directly to the meaning of our text. "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than, having two hands, to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." That is, than to be cast into the state of condemnation and outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, into which the Jews who reject the gospel will be cast.

Will it now be asked, what will become of those Israelites who rejected the Messiah and have been cast into this state of condemnation? Let St. Paul give the answer; "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved."

As it has been premised that the testimony by which a belief in a proposition is to be established, must be free from contradiction, before we can allow that the doctrine of endless misery is proved by the scriptures, they must be found entirely free from any declarations to the contrary.

St. Paul informs us, that God "will have all men to be saved," and that Jesus "gave himself a ransom *for all*" men. Now if God's will and the Saviour's ran-

som finally fail of their object, what can we prove from the scriptures? If those whom God wills to save, and whom the Saviour ransomed are to be miserable eternally, who are to be saved?

The fact is, there is no such testimony in the scriptures, which can, with the least degree of fairness be applied to a state of never-ending misery; and in fact if there were any such testimony in the scriptures, yet it could not prove the proposition, so long as there remain so many positive declarations against it.

Moreover, we feel it to be a duty to state, that in room of straining particular passages, which speak of the punishment of the wicked, so as to favor the idea of unlimited punishment, we should feel justified in restraining any passage, could such be found, that should seem to favor an opinion so dishonorable to God, and so revolting to our best feelings.

It surely should not require so much direct testimony from the scripture to prove that God will have mercy on all men, as to prove that he will not; for if we judge the divine Being by his conduct to men in this life, the evidence of his universal goodness is perfectly ample. And David says, "the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

If what the scriptures assert on this subject be true, and if we may credit the testimony of divine providence, we must conclude, that the doctrine that teaches unmerciful, never-ending punishment, is a direct impeachment of the divine Being; and is the greatest specimen of ingratitude that is to be found in all the world.

This ungrateful doctrine is now held up to be the guardian of morality! In order to be moral we must solemnly and heartily accuse the kind Father of our spirits, who loves sinners and sent his Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, of having predestinated millions of human beings to a state of endless wo, before the creation of the world! If religion and morality begin with such ingratitude, what will be their progress? and what will be their end?

There *is one more* argument which the opposer

may think ought to be noticed, which is the following. As Jesus says, in our text; "it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to be cast into hell, &c.; as entering into life means entering into a state of eternal felicity, hereafter, so being cast into hell, being the opposite of entering into life, seems to favor the opinion that this hell is in the future, eternal world.

In replying to this argument, we shall bring the principal design of the text before the hearer, and introduce the argument of the Saviour for the purpose for which he used it.

And here the hearer is called on to observe that the objection to which we are now about to reply is in fact, founded on a mistake. By entering into life, we have no evidence to believe, that the Saviour had any allusion to entering into a state of complete happiness, in the eternal, immortal state; but we have evidence to the contrary of this, even in the text itself. Observe the words; "it is better for thee to enter into life maimed," &c. He surely did not mean, that men were to enter into a state of immortality in the eternal world *maimed*.

John Baptist, says; "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." St. John says, "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." St. Paul says, "there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." To the Ephesians he says; "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ." This is that life into which those who believe and obey the gospel enter maimed.

But the immortal state is represented glorious and complete.

We shall now solicit the attention of the audience to the consideration of what is meant by being *maimed, in our text,* and to an illustration of the proper object

of the Saviour's argument. Observe the introduction of our subject. "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; for it is better for thee to enter into life maimed," &c.

The evident meaning of the Saviour seems to be this; if one of your nearest connexions in the world, even if one as dear to you as a hand, should oppose your yielding obedience to the gospel, part with this dear connexion rather than part with divine truth. And though you thereby feel as one who has lost a hand, yet what you gain is more than what you lose. In this connexion, Jesus mentions the cutting off of a foot, and the plucking out of an eye for the same cause as the cutting off of the hand; and it is very evident that this recommendation was given on account of the opposition that was constantly in exercise against the cause of truth, and which he knew would increase unto grievous persecution.

Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

It was hard indeed for the disciples of Jesus to part with such tender connexions, and they, no doubt, felt, in some respect, as people do, who have lost a hand, a foot, or an eye; but then on the other hand, they had Jesus who is worth more than all they lost.

St. Paul was called to enter into life at the expense of all that he held dear, of a worldly nature. Brought up at *the feet of* Gamaliel, educated a Pharisee, in

high esteem among his people, and in the confidence of the high Priest of his nation; in his youth when his prospects were exceedingly flattering, and at a moment when he was engaged in rendering all possible service to the interest of those authorities, which were hostile to the cause and disciples of Christ, he is called to embrace the Saviour, and to part with all his connexions and friends on earth. He entered into life maimed. He felt like one who has lost a hand, a foot, and an eye, but thereby saved his life. How often would such a person think of the members gone. How often would he say, O that my hand, my foot, and my eye could again be restored. So it was with St. Paul. He says, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." And again, he says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." But there he saw them, devoted to the worm and fire, described by the prophet Isaiah.—They were the Apostle's "kinsmen according to the flesh." They were to him like lost members of his body, for whom he exercised great and continual concern.

Will the advocate for endless punishment say, that St. Paul's concern for his brethren was because he believed they would never obtain mercy? Will any pretend that Paul was heavy-hearted, because he believed as many do now, that they were consigned over to endless wo?

Such a supposition is in direct opposition to the clear and luminous arguments which this Apostle has left recorded in his epistles, particularly in the 11th of Romans, where he fully explains the occasion of the blindness of the Jews, and largely vindicates their final re-admission to favor. Speaking to the Gentile believers, he says; "For as ye in times past *have not* believed God, but have now obtained *mercy through* their unbelief, even so have these now not

believed, that through your mercy, they also may obtain mercy." And as has been before noticed, he says "All Israel shall be saved."

It surely would be very contrary to the prospects of the christian hope, to suppose that St. Paul, or any other Saint would spend an eternity in the maimed condition that he was in, in consequence of leaving his brethren in darkness and unbelief.

Many professed Christians in our times, and indeed many professed preachers of the gospel, feel or affect to feel great concern for fear the souls of their fellow creatures will be finally sentenced to everlasting tortures in the eternal world. This is a maimedness, which St. Paul has informed us nothing of. But those who now believe the truth as it is in Jesus and yield obedience to its requirements, enter into life maimed. They are called to part with dear connexions, which are near to them as the members of their bodies.

The false religion of anti-christ, like the doctrines of the Pharisees and the Sadducees of old, has so established itself by the power of tradition, is guarded and supported by so many means, which in the eyes of the world are honorable, that to call it in question, to presume to bring it into the light for examination excites great alarm among its friends. One who has been brought up and educated according to the orthodox creed, joined a church, and formed an extensive connexion in religious society, has kind and affectionate parents, brothers and sisters, who are respectable members of the same communion, by some means which heaven has appointed is called to reflect on some of the doctrines of the church, by way of query. Such questions as the following arise in the mind. How is it that a wise, kind, and merciful Creator has predestinated, from eternity, millions of human beings to endless and unspeakable torments? In his providence, he is universally kind; he openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing; why should he not be as universally kind in the economy of his spiritual grace? We read in the scriptures, that "God commended this love toward us, in that while we were

yet sinness, Christ died for us," We furthermore read thatJesus Christ the righteous is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Why should the scriptures speak in such terms if a few only of the human family are subjects of the divine favor? These thoughts and many others revolve in the mind of the supposed individual. The person thus exercised feels a strong desire to speak with some one on the subject; but fears arise that it may give offence! The matter is suffered to rest for the present; the person goes to the house of worship with a determination to learn something, if possible, that may assist in solving these queries. The minister prays; and in his prayer he fervently entreats the Father of mercies to send forth the light and power of the gospel even to the ends of the earth, that all may be brought to a saving knowledge of God. This prayer awakens the attention of our querist, who now says; why does my minister pray for all the world if he has no faith for the whole? The minister preaches; and his sermon is designed to prove the divine sovereignty in electing some to everlasting life, and predestinating others to endless destruction. This contradiction between the prayer and the sermon tries the mind exceedingly. The person goes home, finally feels such powerful exercises of mind, that a determination is formed to talk with others on the subject.

No sooner are these queries made known to the dearest connexions in life, than surprise is manifested; and the person asked whether he is disposed to call in question the mysterious doctrines of the gospel, doubt the creed, and pretend to be wiser than the minister? But all does not satisfy the mind, into which a few scattering beams of divine light have found their way. Says the supposed person, I will go for once and hear a preacher who holds up Jesus a universal Saviour. Yes, this I must do, and if I am despised for it I must bear it. It is accordingly so done, and God blesses the word to the satisfaction of the heavy ladened soul, and Jesus now appears Lord of all, Lord of the dead *and the* living; and the enraptured soul says, I have

seen and must testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. With the heart the person believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. What is next? The church disowns this member and casts it out; family connexions grow cold and alienated in their affections, and this lonely individual enters into life maimed.

What a loss is here! Perhaps father, mother, brothers, sisters, are parted with. Yea, perhaps a husband or a wife, as the case may be.

Joys arise on the one hand, peace is found in believing, and a free universal gospel is life to the soul. On the other hand heaviness of heart, that those dear connexions, which are left in gloomy darkness, and are exercised with the awful terrors of everlasting misery, cannot now see and rejoice in this heavenly, glorious truth, that "God is the Saviour of all men."

But, my brethren and sisters, though many of you have entered into life maimed; though you have left fathers, mothers, companions, brethren and sisters, sons and daughters, you are satisfied that it is better to enter into life thus maimed, than to be cast into that ceaseless fire of erroneous creeds, and to be gnawed with that restless worm of continual fear.

There is likewise one consolation that more than repays all the losses you sustain; your faith and hope enter within the vail where Jesus entered, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; "and ye are *complete* in him." When you contemplate the fulness of him who filleth all things, you perceive that God has purposed to "gather together in one all things in Christ." You "know that the head of every man is Christ," and that not a bone of him shall be broken. You therefore anticipate the time, when you shall enter into immortality and eternal life, not maimed, but being complete in Christ the head of every man, all those dear connexions who oppose you here, will join you there. Those who could not commune with you here, will have no partial creeds there. All will be illuminated with the radiant sun of righteousness, tears

will there be wiped from off all faces, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there he any more pain. But he that sitteth upon the throne shall make all things new according to the pattern shown unto the disciples, in the mount where Jesus was transfigured.

That the hearer may have a clear and distinct understanding of the general subject to which we have attended, a comparison should be carefully made between the state of the disciples of Jesus, in this present world, where, though spiritual life, and the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith, are enjoyed, yet there are many sufferings; such as persecutions for the sake of the word, sorrows of heart for those who oppose the truth, and all the maimedness signified in our text, and of which mention has been made, with that perfect, glorious, and immortal state, of which Jesus spake when treating on the subject of the resurrection, and of which St. Paul, speaks in his 1st epistle to the Corinthians.

The opposer will now say, if you are right, why is it not just as well for us to remain ignorant of these truths as to know them? What difference can it make?

In reply, we will ask the following questions:—Suppose some deceived person should be led to believe, that the coming spring will be so widely different from the vernal seasons which are past, that in room of a warmer sun than winter affords, and in room of the usual zephyrs and flowers of May, the sun will run still lower than in winter, and the winds be more chilling, the frost more intense, and not a flower will be seen, nor a bird heard to sing; further, suppose this gloomy soul should persuade thousands to believe his errors, and should spread a gloom over half the inhabitants of our country, how would those, who remained confident in the goodness and faithfulness of God, feel for their deceived friends? Would they not endeavor to persuade them away from their fears? And would it be just as well for those who should be thus deceived,

to remain in their error, as to live by faith, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, which is hastening on as fast as time moves?

Would it not be very proper to say to the people, who in consequence of this gloomy unbelief, were making no preparations to improve the lovely season of seed time, repent of your errors, see to your concerns, be ready with all your means, for the spring is at hand, the days grow longer, it will be but a short time before the flowers shall appear and the time of the singing of birds will come?

LECTURE XV.

ALL MEN THE CHILDREN OF GOD. DESTRUCTION OF THE DEVIL.

HEBREWS ii. 14, 15.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;—And deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

THE first inquiry, to which the attention of the hearer is invited, will be directed to ascertain some particulars relative to the children mentioned in our text.

We shall see, by the context, that these children comprehend the whole human family. In reference to a passage in the 8th Psalm, the Apostle says; "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him: But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for *every man*." By *man*, it is evident, the Apostle meant *the whole* humanity, as did the prophet also in the *passage* referred to; and by every man, he meant the *same* thing in a distributive view.

The Apostle's argument evidently amounts to this; the glory and honor to which man was originally destined by his Creator, we now see complete in Jesus, who tasted death for every man, and in him only.

Immediately following what we have just quoted from our context, the author, in giving the reason for the sufferings of Jesus calls the whole human nature, taken in the distributive sense before noticed, *sons;* "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many *sons* unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Here it is important that we notice distinctly that the Apostle designed to speak of the Creator when he spake of him, "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things;" and when he spake of many sons, he meant the same as he did by every man; and when he spake of bringing many sons to glory, he meant the bringing of every man to the glory which we see in Jesus, of which he had just spoken.

Directly following our last quotation, the author calls these many sons, who are to be brought unto glory, the brethren of him who is their sanctifier, and says that they are one with him. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren: saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

By him who sanctifieth, the author means Jesus, who is the captain of our salvation; by those who are sanctified, he means every man or the many sons, of whom he had just spoken, and by brethren he means the same thing, and furthermore he calls them the church.

Our author introduces our glorified Saviour, as saying; "Behold I, and the children which God hath given me." *These children* are the same as expressed *by the Apostle in the* following words which have *been quoted;* "What is man?" meaning the whole

human nature. "Every man," meaning the same. "Many sons," comprehending the same. "Brethren" of the great sanctifier; "The church." These are the children mentioned in our text, who are partakers of flesh and blood.

Having ascertained in the first section of our inquiry, that the children mentioned in our text comprehend the whole human family, we may attempt

2dly, To show who is the Father of these children. This question is settled at once by the author in the context, in the following words which have been noticed; "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." These many sons, who are brought unto glory, are the children mentioned in our text, and he for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, is the Father of these children.

If it seem incorrect to the hearer, to call all men the children of God, and if any objection be made to this doctrine on account of the sinfulness of man's character, our argument may be supported by the following considerations.

St. Luke in tracing the genealogy of Jesus carries it up to the creation of man, and says; "Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God." If it be proper to call Adam the son of God, it seems also to be proper to call all the descendants of this first man, the children of God.

If the objection be urged on account of the sinful character of man, we reply, that the children do not destroy this relation by disobedience. For as the relation of parent and child certainly exists before the child becomes active in obedience, or disobedience; it would be false reasoning to argue that obedience could constitute this relation, or that disobedience would disannul it. The Lord says, by the prophet Jeremiah; "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." Thus the divine Being ad-

dresses the wicked by the endearing appellation of children.

That it is consistent with the doctrine of Jesus to allow that sinners are the children of God, this divine teacher fully shows where he teaches us to pray, and say; "Our father which art in heaven—forgive us our sins." Here Jesus teaches the sinner to call God his Father.

St. Paul, speaking to the Athenians, as recorded in the 17th Acts, said; "God that made the world, and all things therein,—hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring." According to this declaration, "all nations of men" are the offspring of God. Let us inquire,

3dly. What this relation of all men to the divine Being consists in?

It seems that the simple fact of man's being created, or formed of the dust of the ground by the hand of God, is not altogether a sufficient cause to account for his being called his offspring; for it is evident that all other creatures and things were equally the production of the divine Power; but the beasts of the field, the fowl of heaven, the fish of the sea are not called the offspring and children of God.

If a man, who is a mechanic, contrive and make never so curious or valuable a piece of machinery, it would not justify our calling him the father of this production of his skill, nor would it justify our calling this machine the son, child, or offspring of him who made it. But if a man have born to him a child, this child partakes of the very nature of the parent, and it is this participation which constitutes the relation of father and child. So if the "Father of spirits" has so constituted man, that he is a partaker of his nature, he

is, in a most proper and divine sense the child and offspring of God.

This is the nature of the relation which constitutes all men the children of God, and this relation lies at the foundation of the divine economy, by which we are amply provided with all things which appertain to life and godliness. This relation accounts for all which we read in scriptures of the love, mercy, and compassions of the divine Being towards man. We cannot conceive the possibility of any being's loving that which is totally different from itself.

But man "is the image and glory of God," and it is as consistent with the nature of things, for God to love his own image in mankind, as it is for parents to love their image in their children.

This relation accounts for the moral obligation that men are under to love God above every other object. "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength," is not an arbitrary command, but is established on the nature of the divine relation in which we stand to our Father which is in heaven. If there were in nature any thing more calculated to happify mankind than is the divine Being, that thing would certainly have the greatest claim on our love.

But this is not the case; there is not in the whole universe any thing so favorable to man, as is the Father of his spirit. God is the fountain from which we came, and nothing but God can satisfy the soul.

David said; "As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." If water were not a part of the composition of the human body, we should never feel a desire for it, nor could it give us the least refreshment. So if we were not partakers of the divine nature in our constitution as mortal beings, we could never feel the least desire for God, nor could the communications of the divine Spirit give us life or any refreshment. How eagerly does one who *is thirsty* receive the cooling draught, and with what

exquisite pleasure does he slake his parching thirst. Jesus says: "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink;" Drink what? The spirit of truth which is a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

This divine relation, which constitutes all men the children of God, explains the meaning of such passages as the following; "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.—Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God:—For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." In these passages men are represented as the sons of God, and while they are in the earthly house of this tabernacle, they are considered in a state of bondage, from which they groan to be delivered; and the state into which they are to enter when the earthly house is dissolved, is the glorious liberty of the children of God, to inhabit a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Now if man was wholly of an earthly nature, if the natural elements which constitute his earthly house of this tabernacle compose the whole of his nature, would there be the least shadow of sense in such scriptures?

To conclude this general inquiry concerning the children mentioned in our text, we may ask, in what way the passage under consideration is to be understood, unless this divine relation of mankind to the Father of our spirits be granted? "The children are partakers of flesh and blood;" If the children were nothing but flesh and blood, why is it said, that they are *partakers* of flesh and blood? "He (Jesus) also *himself likewise took* part of the same." Jesus con

sisted only of flesh and blood, is it intelligible language to say, he took part of the same?

But the christian hearer will say at once, that he has no doubt that Jesus partook of the divine nature, and stood in a constituted relation to his Father, and was something besides flesh and blood. Now when all this is conceded, the hearer's attention is invited to reconsider a part of the context which has been noticed; "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." If Jesus, who is the sanctifier, and mankind who are sanctified by him, are all of one, so that he is not ashamed to call men his brethren, then it is plain that the nature of the relation of Jesus to the Father is the nature of the relation of every man to the Father of our spirits. And this agrees with the scripture which saith that Jesus is "the first-born among many brethren."

The hearer is cautioned against supposing that we mean to level the blessed Redeemer to no more than equality with ourselves, by contending that the relation in which we stand to our Father and his Father; to our God and his God, is the same in which he himself stands; for though all this is evident from the scriptures, yet it is also contained in them, that "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name that is named, whether in this world or that which is to come; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

We may now notice the moral condition which our text and context give to the children named in the text, and concerning whom we have endeavored to direct the foregoing researches.

On this question we may say but little; as the subject is rendered sufficiently clear by the scripture under consideration and its connexion.

In our text, these children are said to be partakers

of flesh and blood, and to be in bondage through fear of death. Just above the Apostle had said, as has been twice noticed; "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one," &c. By this we learn that the children were in an unsanctified state, which rendered their sanctification necessary. And this agrees with the following account which we find in the Apostle's writing to the Ephesians; "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish."

This is the church of which mention is made in our context: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

This is the church which Jesus loved, when it was unsanctified, unclean, full of spots and wrinkles, and in a state of bondage. This church consists of every man or the whole human family, as the Apostle saith in the place where our text lies; "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man."

Our next inquiry may be directed to obtain the meaning of the following words; "He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

These words seem to indicate the following things; —1st. That the devil has the power of death. 2d. That the devil may be destroyed. 3d. That the means by which the devil can be destroyed is that of death. And, 4th. That Jesus took on him flesh and blood for the purpose of destroying the devil, by means of death. Apprehensions are entertained that we are about to encounter some formidable difficulties in the progress of this inquiry, especially if we entertain the

opinion concerning the devil, which has been generally believed. This opinion supposes, that the devil is an immortal spirit, that he was once an angel of light, and an inhabitant of heaven, in which God and holy angels dwell. It supposes that this angel rebelled against the Almighty, for which cause he was driven out of heaven, and cast down to hell, where he will exist in unspeakable torments as long as God shall exist in heaven, happiness, and glory.

Dr. Watts, whose opinion, concerning the devil, or satan, was according to the wisdom of other doctors, has left the following as his sentiment, to be read and sung in christian devotion:

"Far in the deep where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice hath built a dismal hell,
And laid her stores of vengeance there.

Eternal plagues, and heavy chains,
Tormenting racks and fiery coals,
And darts t' inflict immortal pains
Dy'd in the blood of damned souls.

There Satan the first sinner lies,
And roars and bites his iron bands;
In vain the rebel strives to rise,
Crushed with the weight of both thy hands."

Now it is certainly very difficult, according to this doctrine, to account for all that the scriptures say indicating that the devil has continually sojourned in this world. This same author supposes that this satan, who lies in the "dismal hell" of which he spake, crushed with the weight of both the hands of the Almighty, and who strives to rise from his confinement in vain, was the tempter who beguiled our mother Eve. He says;

"When satan in the serpent hid,
Proposed the fruit that God forbid."

And not only does this common opinion about the devil, suppose he was the tempter, who beguiled Eve, but it supposes that he is present with every man

through his whole lifetime on earth, tempting us to sin!

But our authors have not told us how the devil can be confined to that "dismal hell," of which they say so much, and at the same time be here on earth to superintend the vast affairs of sin and wickedness throughout all nations and kingdoms of the world.

There are more difficulties still which we must dispose of as prudently as possible.

If the devil be in fact an immortal spirit, and if he be confined to a state of endless misery, how shall we understand the Apostle in our text, who says, that Jesus took flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil?

How could Jesus, by dying, destroy an immortal, spiritual being? and one too who is to exist as long as Jesus shall exist?

Not only is it believed, that the devil will exist as long as Jesus, who died to destroy him, but it is likewise believed that he will be able to maintain his government over a much larger number of the human race, than will ever be made subject to the laws of the Redeemer. In support of this opinion, such passages of scripture as the following are frequently cited; "Many are called, but few are chosen.—Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It is believed that the adversary is continually exerting himself and using all his infernal arts to lead men into sin, that the divine Being may be moved to sentence them to his dismal abode, where he may have the control of them forever; on the other hand, it is believed that Jesus Christ is continually employing all the means of grace to bring sinners to repentance, that they may be his happy subjects in the eternal world; but the result of all these counter operations, and this warfare between Christ and the adversary will be a *few* to the praise of the *glory* of the Redeemer's name, and

many victims to the more successful endeavors of the prince of darkness!

Notwithstanding these sentiments are thought to be true, and of essential importance in the christian doctrine, yet we hear abundance said, find much written, and not a little sung of the glorious victory which Jesus won over the adversary, when he died, and rose from the dead. But if those sentiments be correct, which give the result of the warfare between Christ and the adversary, so much in favor of the latter, it is evident that another contest, and one more like victory would establish the adversary in universal dominion!

That we may, at once deliver our minds from all the inconsistencies which the common opinion concerning the devil involves, let us avail ourselves of the important fact, that no such sentiment is found in the scriptures, nor in the least favored by reason or common sense.

That the devil was ever a holy angel we have no account in the scriptures; that any man was ever tempted by an agent distinct from the powers of flesh and blood we have no reason to believe. St. James says; "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." And it is a fact, that we are never tempted to commit any sin, that may not be accounted for without a separate agent.

The word devil, or satan, means an adversary, an enemy, an opposer. And this character every man finds in himself. Every man, being a partaker of flesh and blood, has the adversary in him, who tempts him to sin; and can say, with as much propriety as St. Paul did, "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." The Apostle further says; "I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Again he says, "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; *so that* ye cannot do the things that ye would —Now

the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Again he says; "the carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be."

This "carnal mind," this "law of sin," this enmity against God, is the devil, that has the power of death, for "to be carnally minded is death." Corruption and mortality are within the powers of flesh and blood, and the history of sin, evil, and death no where extends beyond those limits.

This power of the flesh was figuratively represented by the serpent, which beguiled Eve; and it was said to the serpent; "dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." The prophet Isaiah says; "dust shall be the serpent's meat."

This serpent is not an immortal spirit; for such a spirit surely would not feed on dust; and the words, "all the days of thy life," certainly indicate that the life of the serpent would come to an end.

It seems that our subject must now be plainly seen by the hearer.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." That is, as the children of God, the heirs of life and immortality are partakers of flesh and blood, in order to abolish death and bring life and immortality to light; in order to destroy the devil and his works, and to triumph over all these earthly and carnal powers, Jesus took on him flesh and blood, was made in all points like unto his brethren, was tempted in all points as we are, subdued every temptation of the flesh, by the power of the spirit which he had without measure, laid down his natural life, arose from the dead incorruptible and immortal. "He dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." Flesh and blood which cannot *inherit the kingdom* of God, and corruption

which cannot inherit incorruption are no more. The serpent's days are ended, he has no more dust to eat, he is destroyed and is no more.

If the adversary had an immortal constitution, could exist out of flesh and blood as well as in them, the putting off all flesh and blood, would only demolish one of the enemy's encampments, while it would leave him unbounded space and eternity to occupy still.

We may now draw to a conclusion, by an attempt to illustrate the following clause of our text; "And deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

For want of the knowledge of life and immortality, which Jesus has brought to light by his resurrection from the dead, men are perpetually subject to bondage through fear of death. But a belief in the gospel of our blessed Redeemer gives us a complete victory over all such fears. It enters the silent, dark mansion of the dead with a steady clear light which directs us to the bright abodes of immortal life.

The disciples of Jesus, who were favored with positive evidence of the resurrection of the Saviour, were so completely delivered from the bondage of fear, that they never hesitated to publish the doctrine of the resurrection even to the perpetual hazard of their lives.

Such was the persuasion which St. Paul had of the truth of the resurrection, and the glory of the future world, that he said; "I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." This Apostle built all his hopes of a future existence on the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He says; "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.—But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.—For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." He further says; "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.—And as we have borne the im-

age of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

In the image of the earthy man we find the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. We find a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin. We find all the fruits of the flesh, and all the devil, of which the Apostle speaks in our text, that has the power of death. But in the image of the heavenly man none of these things exist. No carnal mind, no enmity against God, no law in the members warring against the law of the mind. That flesh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and that corruption which cannot inherit incorruption, will exist no more.

The "whole creation," thus delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, will realize the fulness of what we now see but in part.

My brethren, how near are these things! but a moment, as it were, separates us from the immortal scenes anticipated by the christian faith. The view of these eternal things and a steady belief in them, are present victory over the powers of the flesh. This is indeed a holy calling, a calling to heavenly-mindedness and heavenly conversation. These thoughts and contemplations are blossoms in the desert, they are pools in parched ground. This doctrine of eternal life is a river in a dry place, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Jesus says; "In the world you shall have tribulation. but in me ye shall have peace."

My friends do not reject and refuse this peace, this joy, this consolation, because it is free to all. You do not refuse the light and warmth of the sun because all men have it; why then will you turn your backs on the grace of Jesus because he is that wisdom which is without partiality?

LECTURE XVI.

THE SECOND DEATH.

REVELATION xxi. 8.

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

THIS passage is among the number which have been used to prove a state of intolerable misery in the eternal world, and continually recited in those terrific sermons which were designed to awaken the fears, and operate on the timidity of the ignorant.

Our duty leads us to investigate the use which has been made of this passage, to examine the propriety of its common application, and as plainly as possible refute whatever may appear incongruous with the word of God, and the doctrine of his grace. It will likewise be expected, that suitable labor will be directed to discover the true sense of this, and similar passages.

Our text informs us, that the lake of fire and brimstone is the second death, and as this death is called "the *second* death," it evidently refers to a first death. The common doctrine of the church supposes that the first death is the death of the natural body, and the second death the eternal condemnation of the soul and body after the resurrection, in a state of the most exquisite torture.

There seems to be no small inconsistency in this opinion, in that it makes the second death to be second to something as entirely different from itself as any thing could be invented. The death of the body *consists* in a total extinction of animal life, in an entire

destitution of all sense, and renders the subject incapable of pleasure or pain. Where then is the propriety of calling a state of the quickest sensation, and the most intolerable misery second to that which is altogether unlike it?

While a person lives in this world, he is subject to sorrow, adversity, sickness, and pain. Why then would it not seem altogether more congruous to call a state of misery hereafter the second life, than to call it the second death, that is, second to the death of the body?

Another very great inconsistency in the common use of our text is, that it supposes that after people shall have ceased from all the sins which are enumerated in the text, and are in a constitution of existence in which no such crimes can ever be committed, they are then and there to be tormented for what they did in this world. No one supposes that there will be unbelievers, whoremongers, idolaters, &c. in the eternal world. What reason then is there in supposing that in a world where no crime can never be committed, crimes will be eternally punished? In this world we are obliged to punish crimes, and the object is to reclaim the criminal, or to deter others from committing like offences, or both. But what is this punishment for in the eternal world, in which no one pretends that any crime can ever be committed?

Will the advocate for this hereafter punishment, pretend that it is inflicted on mankind because they have been sinful in this world? We will then endeavor to show that this is not a correct answer.

Suppose then that a man now commits a crime, say theft, or murder, must he be punished? Yes, he surely must be punished. Why, what necessity is there of this, punishment? Answer; if he be not punished, he will repeat the crime with impunity, and restraint will be taken from others, and crimes will be multiplied.

This is admitted as a rational answer, and public sentiment yields to the execution of the law.

But this answer cannot be given in relation to this

supposed punishment in the future world; for punishment can be no terror to evil doers, where there are none.

In case of criminality in this world, could it be made to appear, that the relinquishment of penalty would in no way tend to multiply crimes, the humanity and good sense of the public would most surely discontinue to punish.

It is evident that punishment regards the future, and directs its endeavors to reclaim from wickedness and to prevent crimes.

By the prophet Isaiah, God says to sinful Israel; "Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more." The evident sense of this is, there is no good reason for punishing, unless evil can be prevented by it.

But what evil will be prevented by this endless punishment in the future world? Its advocates do not pretend that it will either make its subjects better, or restrain others from sin.

But it is said, that it necessary to hold up the terrors of endless punishment to deter people from committing sin in this world. If this be all, there is no necessity of the doctrine's being a truth, if it be believed, though in fact it be false, it has all the effect to deter people from committing sin that it would have were it true.

But we are ready to deny even this utility to the doctrine in question. For the advocate of the doctrine makes provisions which completely nullify its power to produce any such effect. He informs the transgressor that if he repent of his sins any time in this life he will avoid this punishment hereafter; and moreover he certifies him that repentance is within his own power, and that he can repent any time if he will. Now where is the terror?

We will suppose that our legislature makes a law that if a man steal to the amount of a certain sum, he *shall, on* conviction thereof, be confined to hard labor *for life* unless he shall in one week after committing *the crime* wash his hands in clean water. Would there

be any terror in this law? Would this law prevent wicked men from stealing? No, it would not. Nor does telling them that unless they repent of their sins before they die they will be punished for them in the future world prevent their committing sins.

Having suggested these improprieties in the common use of our text, we may now proceed to inquire for the scripture doctrine concerning it.

As this lake of fire and brimstone is called the second death, we wish to have it kept in mind, that wherever we read of the lake of fire, the same is the second death; and wherever we read of the second death, the same is the lake of fire.

The first passage in which we find the second death mentioned, in these words, is recorded in the 2d of Revelation, and in the epistle to the church of Smyrna; "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried: and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life; He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches: he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

This was written to a christian church, and plainly indicated that those who should not overcome the trials with which they were about to be tried, but who should be overcome by them, should be hurt of the second death.

If the hearer will use proper caution on this subject, what is meant by the second death will be very plainly seen. This church of Smyrna had been collected from among the Gentile idolaters. The state they were in, before their conversion to christianity is called death in the language of the New Testament. In his epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul says; "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." The blindness of the Jews and the idolatry of the Gentiles are represented as a state of death from which the gospel was designed to raise and quicken the nations. Jesu

said; "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." St. John says; "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And St. Paul again says; "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

This state of moral death in which the gospel found both Jews and Gentiles, is the first death. From this death the gospel quickened and raised its converts into newness of life, and espoused them to Christ.

To the Romans St. Paul says; "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin, therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Being made alive unto God by faith in Jesus, and having turned their backs on the idols they had formerly worshipped, these Gentile christians were exposed to grievous persecutions; and in this epistle, which St. John wrote on the isle of Patmos, they are reminded of certain trials which they were about to encounter, and are told that those, who should overcome, should not be hurt of the second death. That is, if they remained steadfast in the doctrine of Christ, they should not again fall into a state of death, which would be to them a second death.

In the epistle to the church of Sardis we have an account of this death's having actually taken place. The following is the account; "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." This death had come upon them in consequence of *their having* defiled their garments. The writer says *to the minister* of the church; "Thou hast a few *names* even in Sardis, which have not defiled their *garments*; and they shall walk with me in white: for

they are worthy." This was a plain intimation that the most of them in Sardis had defiled their garments; and if they had defiled their garments, it proves that they had had clean garments, for that which is not clean cannot be defiled.

Here then the case is plain. Those people had been washed in the water of regeneration; their garments had been made white in the blood of the Lamb; they had been made alive by the quickening spirit of Christ; but now they had turned from the holy commandments which had been delivered unto them; they had defiled their garments; and though they retained the name of Christ, yet they were dead; and this death must be the second death; for they had been dead in sin before.

The writer of the epistle further observes; "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." Now it is plain that those who had defiled their garments had not overcome, and as they were dead, their names were blotted out of the book of life. This shows that their names had been in the book of life, for if they had not, how could they have been blotted out. Names that are in a book may be blotted out of that book, but it is not possible to blot a name out of a book in which it was never written?

We can now see the reasonableness of saying, that the second death is the apostacy which has taken place under the gospel dispensation.

Of this falling away we read in a number of passages. St. Paul speaks of it to the Thessalonians as follows; "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except their come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed; the son of perdition—whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

St. Peter speaks of apostate christians, and calls them "cursed children; which have forsaken the right

way, and are gone astray." And further he says of them; "If after they have escaped the polutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered unto them."

It is evident that those of whom the Apostle spake, had been in the right way, otherwise they could not have forsaken it. They had known the way of righteousness, but had turned from the holy commandments which they had received; they had escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Jesus, but were again entangled therein and overcome. These were dead the second time. Jude speaks of them as follows; "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding, themselves without fear: clouds are they without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots."

Let it be observed in this place, that the errors by which christianity was early corrupted, and the false doctrines which were introduced into the church, together with all the vile and abominable idolatries and senseless superstitions which have characterised christianity for ages form what we mean by the second death, and constitute what the scriptures mean by a lake of fire and brimstone.

We have an account of this fire and brimstone in the 14th of Revelation as follows; "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured *out* without mixture into the cup of his indignation; *and he* shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in *the* presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of *the* Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth

up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

The hearer is requested to keep in mind that this fire and brimstone, and the second death are the same. And as we have already seen that the primitive christians did, many of them, apostatize from the truth, defile their garments, were overcome by the corruptions of the world and were hurt of the second death; and as all this appears to have taken place here in this mortal state, and to have not the least allusion to a state of punishment in the future world, we will now examine what we have just quoted concerning this torment with fire and brimstone, and see if it be in this world or in the eternal state.

The first thing the hearer is requested to get possession of is, that this torment is experienced by the worshippers of the beast at and during the time of their woshipping him. This is of importance to understand; for the common use of this scripture supposes that the divine Being will torment men in the future state, out of revenge because they worshipped the beast here in time; as if they were the gainers here by worshipping the beast, and he the loser; but finally the Almighty finds means, in the eternal world, to inflict such vengeance on those deluded creatures, as will perfectly satisfy him for the loss he sustained by their worshipping the beast.

We do not mean to say that those who hold the common opinion of the text, pretend to say, that the divine Being is a loser by men's worshipping the beast, or that they are gainers by such worship; what we contend for is, that the divine Being will certainly act on some principle, and as it is not allowed that this punishment is designed to reclaim or to deter, it must be to revenge, which supposes an injury received.

Let us ask the candid questions, and let them be candidly answered, *if* God has received no injury from *his creatures, why* should he be unfriendly towards *them? And if* there be no real gains to the creature

who worships the beast, no profit arising from all his services, why is not this foolish, idolatrous, and superstitious worship bad enough to punish its deluded votaries.

Let us try the force of the following metaphor, which we shall find to be apposite to the present subject. You who are the parent of a number of children have an enemy, who, taking the advantage of the dusk of the evening, and by putting on some of your clothes and by imitating your voice deceives your children, so that while they think they are following your directions through the most dreary, unpleasant ways, they are zealously executing your enemy's most cruel injunctions. The poor deluded children sometimes complain of their hard service, and of being destitute of refreshment or rest, but are told to hold on with good courage, that though their lot be hard at present, they may rest assured that as it is their kind father who is leading them, he will reward them tenfold for all they suffer. This deception goes on until morning. No sooner than day-light appears, one of your children happens to get a glance of the haggard visage of your inveterate foe! He starts back and refuses to go any further, and calls on his brethren and sisters to stop, and tells them they are all deceived, and are devoted to the service of their father's enemy. They no sooner find their error, than their deluder leaves them, and you find your wandering offspring wounded, and half dead. When they see you they rejoice and fly to your embrace, deeply regret the delusion that has led them from you, and humbly implore your favor. The question now before you is this, will you now punish your emaciated offspring because they have been deluded into misery and want? Your answer is anticipated. You reply, No, surely my children have suffered enough, I will now let them see that their father's yoke is easy, and that his burden *is light.*

That this metaphor is justified by the subject, may be seen by the following in St. Paul's epistle to the Thessalonians. Speaking of the man of sin, he says:

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." If the beast spoken of in Revelations had not deceived the people he surely never would have been worshipped. And if we examine the passage which speaks of the torment endured by the worshippers of the beast, we shall see that the worshippers are thus tormented, while they worship. Notice these words; "And they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast." *Have* and *worship*, are in the same tense. And we have no more authority for supposing that the worshippers of the beast are to be tormented any longer than they worship him, than for supposing that they were thus tormented before they worshipped him.

The hearer will also carefully notice these words; "They have no rest day nor night." Here we find the present tense and the present state distinctly set forth. "*They have no rest;*" that is, they are now destitute of rest, "*Day nor night.*" That is, here, where time is divided by day and night.

Having ascertained that this torment is during day and night, and while the tormented are worshipping the beast, it will contribute much to the settling of the subject, to know how long this beast is to be worshipped. In the 13th chapter of the Revelations, we have the account wanted, it reads thus; "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." In the 11th chapter, we are informed that the Gentiles should tread the holy city under foot forty and two months. This is the same forty and two months, which the beast had power to continue.

Now if we multiply forty-two by thirty, the number of days which the Jews allowed to a month, the amount is twelve hundred and sixty days. This is *exactly the same time* which the two witnesses were to *prophecy in sackcloth*, as we read in chapter 11th, "*And I will give power* to my two witnesses, and they

shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth." One thousand two hundred and three score, is twelve hundred and sixty. This is the same period with the three days and an half which the dead bodies of the two witnesses were to lie in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. If we call a day a year, three years and an half contain forty and two months. And this is the same as the time, times, and half a time, which the woman, of whom we read in the 12th chapter, was to be in the wilderness. Calling these times prophetic years, we find the forty and two months, which afford the twelve hundred and sixty days, which we may suppose are so many years.

Twelve hundred and sixty natural years is as long a time as can be allowed for the continuance of the beast, of his worship, or the torment of his worshippers with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

It is evident, beyond all dispute, that there is no more propriety in carrying the second death, or lake of fire and brimstone into the eternal world, than there is in supposing that the forty and two months the beast had power to continue, are to be reckoned in the eternal world; or in supposing that the holy city will be trodden under foot of the Gentiles in the eternal world; or in supposing that the two witnesses will prophecy clothed in sackcloth in the eternal world; or that their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city called Sodom and Egypt, three days and an half, in the eternal world; or that the woman will be in the wilderness a time, times and half a time in the eternal world.

This representation of the religion and doctrines of the church of antichrist, by fire and brimstone agrees with the prophecy of Isaiah, recorded in his 34th chapter. "And the streams thereof shall be turned into *pitch*, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the *land* thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not *be* quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go *up* forever; from generation to generation it shall lie *waste*; none shall pass through it forever and ever."

It would seem that a land of this description could not be inhabited by any creature whatever; but the prophet says; "But the Cormorant and the Bittern shall possess it; the Owl also and the Raven shall dwell in it." He further supposes that wild beasts will dwell in this land of brimstone and fire, and says; "There shall the great Owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow." This language is so similar to the account we have of this fire and brimstone in Revelations, that we may suppose they both relate to the same subject.

The unclean beasts and birds, mentioned by Isaiah, are the same as mentioned in Revelations 18th. "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

It seems to have been the design of prophecy, to represent the church and her doctrines by a land whose very dust is brimstone, and whose streams are burning pitch, and her clergy and rulers by unclean birds and ravenous beasts. And it is certain that the church of antichrist, with its rulers, its clergy, its doctrines, and superstitions, has answered the description in full.

We will now endeavor to show that the characters mentioned in our text are those who answer to the worshippers of the beast, that they are the unclean beasts and birds of Babylon, and that their doctrine in room of being a pure river of the water of life, is fire and brimstone by which they are tormented.

The first character mentioned in our text is the fearful. Fear is the very foundation of antichristian religion. It views God in the character of a most voracious beast. It worships him with a view to pacify his wrath. It represents him as full of vengeance towards all who do not render him faithful service, and supposes that he will punish them unmercifully, if they do not yield to his requirements. This religion *says, take away the fear* of eternal damnation, and I *would never worship* God again, I would pay no regard *to his ordinances.*

This religion is in fact a stream of fire and brimstone, *fire*, because it is full of zeal, and *brimstone*, because it destroys the reason of its votaries. There is nothing which more suddenly destroys the regular action of the brain, than sulphur. Fear is of this nature, it sets reason at defiance. So has the religion of the church. It says, reason has nothing to do with religion. What St. John says of fear and love seem very appropriate in this place. He says "Fear hath torment," and again; "Perfect love casteth out fear."

The unbelieving is the second character mentioned. But who are unbelievers? They are those whose creeds contradict the faith of Abraham. God promised Abraham, that in him, and in his seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. And it is said, that Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Abraham was therefore called the friend of God, and the father of the faithful. Now those who believe in that Babylonish creed which excludes a great part of mankind from the blessings of Jesus and his grace, are the unbelieving mentioned in our text. These unbelievers suppose that they are the only true believers on earth, and their belief is like fire and brimstone, and the more firmly they believe, the more intensely they are burnt. They have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

How much is a man's part in this torment? Just so much as will correspond with the perverseness of his abominable belief. In the same ratio as they believe, they are tormented, and as far as they doubt they find relief.

The abominable is the third character mentioned. There are many sinful practices, which are called abominable in scripture; one may be mentioned, of which Israel was guilty, and by which the christian church has become contaminated. In his 16th chapter, Ezekiel charges Jerusalem of having committed more abominations than were committed by Sodom and her daughters; and among those the following is stated; "Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daugh

ters, whom thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them (idols) to be devoured." This has been done in the antichristian church, by that doctrine which consigns little children to everlasting torment for the glory of that idol god, who delights in such cruelty. Every soul that believes this doctrine is tormented day and night. If they have children how are their souls tormented with the fearful apprehension of their everlasting destruction?

Murderers are the fourth class. "He that loveth not his brother is a murderer." And that antichristian doctrine which teaches that God hates his creatures has caused men to hate one another, and to put thousands to death. This murderous, persecuting spirit is a perpetual fire, and torments every soul that possesses it.

Whoremongers are the 5th class. These are those who get their living by means of spiritual adultery, under the direction of the mother of harlots. These are unclean birds. Isaiah calls them Owls, Satires, Ravens, &c. He says; "There shall the great Owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow." This is an unclean bird that is afraid of the light.

Sorcerers are the sixth character. These are famous for their wisdom, and very deep understanding in dark mysterious matters. They know every thing about another world; and in their own conceit, or pretensions can inform people concerning what they call heaven and hell. These are a torment to themselves.

Idolaters form the seventh class. These are all who worship the false god, who sits in the temple of God, showing himself to be God.

Liars are mentioned last. The author of our text, has given a description of a liar. He says; "Who is a liar, but he who denieth that Jesus is the Christ; he is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son."

These worshippers of the beast are the dead, small *and great, which* John saw stand before God; who *were judged out* of those things which were written in

the books, which are the doctrines of men, according to their works. They had received the mark and name of the beast, therefore their names were not in the Lamb's book, or doctrine of life. These were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

The hearer is requested to observe that the arguments to which we have attended, go to prove that the false doctrines of antichrist constitute the second death, and the lake of fire and brimstone, and that these doctrines perpetually torment them who believe them. Our reasoning disallows the continuance of this torment after those doctrines of antichrist shall be discontinued. The worshippers of the beast will be tormented as long as they worship him; but he had power given him to continue only forty and two months. The hearer is likewise requested to observe, what has already been noticed, that in order to extend the second death or lake of fire and brimstone into another state of existence, we must also carry the time of the church in the wilderness, the time of the prophecying of the two witnesses, in sackcloth, and the forty and two months of the reign of the beast into a future state. All which is palpably absurd.

My brethren, this discourse will close with the following divine injunction; "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

LECTURE XVII.

SALVATION, A DELIVERANCE FROM ERROR AND SIN, THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD.

2 TIMOTHY i. 9, 10.

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began:—But it is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Our first inquiry will be directed to ascertain what the Apostle means by the word *saved*. With a view to bring this subject to the understanding of the hearer, in as plain and as profitable a manner as possible, we shall attempt in the first place to examine the common doctrine of the church respecting salvation, and in the second place bring the scripture testimony on the subject into view, that the difference between the common doctrine and the divine testimony may distinctly appear.

What we propose to examine in the first place is found in the following statement, which is here quoted from the shorter chatechism; "All mankind by the fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." This is the miserable state into which man fell, according to the sentiment under examination; and from which God provided means to save some, accordingly as is expressed thus; "God having out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them *out of the state of sin* and misery, and to bring them *into a state of salvation* by a Redeemer."

It is evident that the learned divines, who compos-

ed this creed, designed to apply the doctrine of salvation in a way to save the elect from the everlasting pains of hell, more specially than to save them from the miseries of this life and from death; for it is a fact well known to all, that whoever these elected ones may be, they are subject to death as well as others, and it is generally thought that they have a larger share of the miseries of this life.

This common doctrine of salvation may therefore be stated thus; All mankind, the elect and non-elect, by the fall are under God's wrath and curse, which curse is the pains of hell after the death of the body and forever; but in conformity to a decree of God, made from all eternity, there is a Redeemer provided to save the elect from this everlasting curse.

Having now before us the doctrine of salvation as it has been held in the christian church for a long time, and as it is now held and taught to old and young, let us attempt to examine its propriety. And let this be done with all that candor which is due to all subjects of moment, and especially to this which evidently involves the character of the divine Being. Let it be done too with that charity towards the framers of this creed and towards those who now believe in it, which holds the higest rank among the christian virtues; for certain it is that this candor and charity are necessary to be kept in constant exercise, among such short-sighted, benighted creatures.

On approaching the proposition before us, the following absurdities present themselves.

1st. It is absurd to say, that those whom God elected from all eternity to be saved by a Redeemer, are liable to the pains of hell forever.

2d. It appears absurd to say, that those whom God entered into a covenant to save, are under his wrath and curse, by which everlasting misery hereafter is intended.

3d. This scheme of salvation accuses the divine Being of partiality in the most direct manner. It states that all mankind are in one condition, all under God's wrath and curse, and all liable to the pains of hell for-

ever; but that though all are in one condition, the scheme of salvation embraces only a part without extending the least benefit to the rest.

4th. The doctrine under examination supposes that the divine Being has condemned millions of unborn infants to the pains of hell forever, for an act which Adam and Eve committed in the garden of Eden, which certainly appears to be unjust in the extreme.

Let candor look, for one moment, at these absurdities and improprieties, and at the same time let charity kindly impute them to the imperfection of our common nature.

A body of learned divines have said after much deep study and profound deliberation, that God from all eternity elected some of the human race unto salvation by a Redeemer, and at the same time say, that these elected ones are under his curse which is the pains of hell forever in the future world. These learned doctors, who knew that the scriptures assert the impartiality of God, and who professed to believe that he is no respecter of persons, have limited his eternal mercy to but a part of mankind, and have excluded the rest from his favor forever. Notwithstanding they well knew, that it is repugnant to the law of God to condemn the innocent, and that the divine Being hath said, "the son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father," yet for one act of Adam they have condemned all mankind to a state of endless misery.

According to these tenets thousands of millions of unhappy wretches have already been sent to this hell, of which these divines speak, without ever knowing until they got there, that there ever was an Adam, or that he had sinned and involved them in this awful calamity to all eternity. How many millions of infants, of people who were educated in christian countries, have gone from this world before they were old enough to understand the horrible story framed by these divines; but *much more* numerous still is the number *of those who were* born in heathen lands and never *heard of any part of* the christian scriptures, much less, *if possible of this* antiscriptural creed.

Such is the general corruption of the christian doctrine, introduced by the creed under consideration, that all which people think of being saved from is the pains of hell hereafter.

On this notion sermons in general have been framed, and carefully directed to instruct people in the way by which they may be saved from this hell in the future state.

This future misery is the gloomy subject, which is presented to people's minds, in all the vivid forms which imagination and the most powerful eloquence have been able to set forth, in order to terrify the mind and to call into action the most fearful apprehensions of which the human mind is susceptible. All this is considered necessary in order to lead sinners to repentance, by which they may avoid this state of torment.

This scheme of doctrine leads the mind to understand the scriptures, which speak of saving sinners, to mean the saving them from hell in the eternal world, or from the wrath and curse of God hereafter.

The hearer is requested to take this common opinion into careful consideration and compare it with the scripture testimony. First examine to see if you can find this wrath and curse of God resting on all mankind, of which such careful mention is made in the creed to which we have alluded.

After a careful and patient examination of the divine testimony, your humble servant has unspeakable joy in being able to say that this wrath and curse of God is no where recorded in the scriptures.

When those doctors who framed the creed undertook to describe the consequences of the first transgression, did they at all confine themselves to the divine word? No surely they did not; for if they had done this, they would not have found that God pronounced any curse even on Adam and Eve themselves, much less on all mankind for what these two *did*.

If this unaccountable notion of the wrath and curse *of* God were a truth would it not have been announced *by* the Creator on his first visit to his sinful chil

dren? But did the merciful Father of our spirits intimate to Adam and Eve, that they had brought his wrath and curse, which are eternal misery, not only on themselves, but on all their numerous, unborn offspring?

No, blessed be his name, he mentioned but two curses, and one of them was on the serpent, and the other was on the ground. And in room of saying one word concerning cursing all mankind with the pains of hell in a future state, the divine Being did not intimate that even the serpent himself would be subject to any infelicity beyond his natural life. "Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life;" and beyond this there was no intimation. It was said to the serpent; "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here in room of God's wrath and curse on our first parents, is a blessed and glorious promise of a final victory over, and deliverance from the power of the tempter.

Let us next inquire for the scripture testimony concerning salvation, and endeavor to understand what we are saved from, and by what means we are saved.

On this particular, less will be necessary than would be required if the same had not been noticed in some of our former lectures; yet such is the importance of the doctrine under consideration, as to justify its frequent investigation.

It was said by the Angel of God, to Joseph, concerning the child Jesus, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." According to this, that from which Jesus saves us, is our sins. But according to the common doctrine, it seems that the angel would have said; thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save the elect from the wrath and curse of God in the future world.

In justifying himself before the scribes and Pharisees, who accused him of receiving sinners and eating with them, our Saviour represented sinners by a sheep gone astray, and the repentance and salvation of sinners he represented by the return of the lost sheep to the

fold, by the diligent concern and care of the shepherd. Let us here ask, what the sheep that went astray was saved from? Was it saved from the wrath and curse of its owner? Had the shepherd any decree out against the comfort and life of this strayed member of his flock? Would it not seem absurd in the extreme to pretend that the shepherd went after the sheep with a view to save it from his own vengeance? The fact is, the sheep was saved from its wanderings and from all the inconveniences of the condition into which it had wandered.

The parable of the prodigal son is another beautiful representation of the salvation of sinners, and is found in connexion with the parable of the lost sheep, and used by the Saviour for the same purpose.

But what was the Prodigal finally saved from by being brought to repentance, and to his father's house? Was he saved from any wrath and curse of his father? Had the father any unmerciful decree out against his son's life or happiness! When the returning son was yet a great way off, and the father's compassion urged him to run and meet his child, was this parental effort, and all the mighty tide of compassion manifested on that occasion exerted to save this son from his father's wrath and curse?

The hearer cannot but see that nothing could be more unreasonable than this notion. And yet is it not as plain as the sun at noon, that the common doctrine of salvation is predicated exactly on this absurdity? Does it not explain scripture in a way to represent the divine Creator as exerting the means of his grace to save sinners from his own wrath and curse? Does it not hold up the idea that God sent his son to suffer and die for sinners, in order to save them from this curse of the Father, which curse is said to be the pains of hell forever? Does it not constantly hold forth the notion, that the ministry of the gospel is now *exerting* all its energies and means to snatch sinners *away* from the divine wrath, as brands are plucked *from* a fire?

The divine instructor on another similar occasion

to the one we have just noticed, made use of the following simile; "The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. For the Son of man is not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

As the Saviour represented the case of the sinner by one who is sick, and the salvation of the sinner by the recovery of the sick to health by means of a physician, we may ask, if it could be reconciled with reason and common sense, to pretend that the physician exerts his skill and the power of his medicine to save his patient from his wrath and indignation?

The fact is, my christian friends, Jesus who dwells in the bosom of the Father, never represented his doctrine of salvation to be in any sense like the doctrine of the church which we have examined. Our heavenly Father, as manifested in his Son, and as held up by the preaching of Jesus, loves his enemies, loves sinners, and because he loves them he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. He sent him to save us from our sins, and to reconcile us to God.

St. Paul to the Colossians says of God; "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

This passage very plainly shows us the nature of that salvation of which our text speaks. It is a salvation from error, deception, ignorance and all their evils, to truth, knowledge, understanding and all their blessings.

To the Ephesians he says, that "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Let us carefully examine this representation, for here the apostle informs us the object which Christ had in view when he gave himself for the church. And what was it? Was it to appease his Father's wrath? *Was it to reconcile the* Father to the church? Was *it to save the church* from God's wrath and curse in *the eternal world?*

No, my brethren, Jesus gave himself for the church that he might sanctify and cleanse it. The church was in an unsanctified, unclean state, and the gospel or doctrine of Christ is that water or word by which he cleanses and saves it from its uncleanness. Christ saves his church from all spots and wrinkles, and presents it to himself a glorious church. Hark and hear those sons and daughters speak in loud exclaim; "Thou hast loved us and washed us from our sins in thine own blood."

Our next endeavors will be directed to illustrate what the Apostle means by the holy calling, with which he accompanies our salvation, and to show the natural connexion in which they stand to each other.

This subject may be seen most clearly by a little improvement of the similes which were used to represent the nature of salvation. But we may commence these remarks by recurring to the words of the Angel to Joseph; "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Now it appears very consistent that when Jesus saves a sinner from his sins, he should at the same time call him to walk in holiness of life. Otherwise what benefit could there result from this salvation?

If what is meant by saving the sinner, is to save him from the penalty of the law, it is true such a salvation might be entirely disconnected with a holy calling. If a man, for instance, have stolen, for which crime the law says he shall be thus and so punished, and we wish to save him from receiving such punishment, there would be no necessary connexion between such salvation and the reformed and virtuous conduct of this man. But if the object be to save the man from being a thief, it is absolutely necessary in this case to furnish the man with such moral sentiments, and such a sense of moral virtue as will prevent his repeating the crime.

There seems to be an evident connexion likewise, between bringing the lost sheep back to the fold, and such measures as might be necessary to prevent it from again going astray; for if the propensity to wan-

der still remains, and there be no provisions to prevent indulgence, there would seem an impropriety in making those exertions by which the sheep was found and returned to the fold.

This subject is very clearly seen in the case of the reformed prodigal. If after he had returned to his father's house, and had been there most kindly received; if after all his penitence and reformation; if after he had been clothed with the best robe, had shoes put on his feet, and his father's ring upon his hand; if after partaking of the fatted calf and the joys of the family on this occasion, he had again turned his back on his father, and again acted the prodigal, the joy that had lighted up the countenances of the family would most surely have been turned into mourning, and in room, of festivity, fasting would be more suitable to the occasion.

But it is most clearly seen that every circumstance which contributed to the return of this lost son, and all the favor which was shown him by his father, together with all the enjoyments of the full and well replenished house to which he was welcomed, called, in the most persuasive manner, on him who had been dead, but made alive, who had been lost, but was found, to take heed to his ways, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith his father had made him free, that he might continue to enjoy those invaluable blessings.

My christian friends, has our merciful Father in heaven condescended to forgive us all our trespasses, has he clothed us with the white linen of the righteousness of Christ, have we tasted that the Lord is gracious, and been permitted to set at his table, and to feast on those rich provisions with which Zion is blessed? And do not these favors call us with an holy calling, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God?

This same Apostle has signified the sentiment of our text, in the following words to Titus; "For the grace of *God which bringeth* salvation hath appeared to all *men, teaching us, that,* denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly

in this present world. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Here is redemption from all iniquity, and purification unto good works. And this is again expressed in the following words to the Ephesians; "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." One passage more may suffice on this particular. St. Peter addresses his brethren as follows; "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And, beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

By the similes and passages which we have employed in the illustration of this section of our text, it appears that holiness of life is a requisition enjoined by

the gospel, and that this holiness of conduct should be considered as properly connected with our salvation from sin.

In the passage quoted from St. Peter, we may notice particularly that we are required to add to our faith the christian graces, such as virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity, with the assurance, that if these things be in us, and abound, our fruitfulness in the knowledge of our Lord will be such whereby an entrance will be administered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The conclusion then is evident, that although we may profess the true faith, yet if we do not attend to our holy calling, our faith becomes dead, cannot work by love, nor purify the heart.

Let us therefore, my brethren, endeavor to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

Our text informs us that our salvation and calling are not according to our works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began. By this we understand, that as early as the divine Being purposed the gift of Jesus Christ to the world of mankind, he gave us in him this salvation and holy calling. This grant therefore, could not be governed by the works of man, it could not be said to be according to our works for the following reasons.

1st. It was given us in Jesus Christ before we were either born or had done good or evil.

This subject may be represented by the following similes. When the Almighty made the earth, the sun, the moon, and all things for the convenience of all creatures, he gave the present generation of men the earth, the sun, the moon, and all material things. This gift, being in the constitution of nature, and made sure *to us ages before* we were born, could not have been *given as a reward* for our works.

Again, When the Creator formed Adam, and con-

stituted him the natural father of us all, he then gave us, in him, eyes, with which we see, ears, with which we hear, mouth's with which we speak, feet, with which we walk, and hands, with which we labor. And it is very evident, that these gifts were not given us as a compensation for our works. But it appears very clear that our duty, and natural calling, to make proper use of our eyes, our ears, our mouths, our feet, and our hands was given us in that constitution in which those natural faculties were given.

Though we are much crowded for want of time to illustrate the several remaining particulars contained in our text, we feel pressed to mention in this place, the error so frequently urged on us by those who exhort us to get an interest in Christ. The hearer will perceive by these plain arguments, and the passage under consideration, that we all had an interest in Jesus Christ before the world began. And you will further observe that there is just as much propriety in exhorting people to get an interest in Adam so that they may inherit from him the natural faculties of the body, as to exhort us to get an interest in Christ. But it is not only proper, but highly necessary that all adhere to the exhortation to improve all temporal and all spiritual blessings and gifts in a way to honor the benevolent giver.

2d. If the Apostle made a comparison between his former conduct, when he was among the persecutors of Christ, his doctrine, and his disciples, he might very justly say that the salvation which he had obtained by the gospel, and the holy calling with which he was called were not according to his former works. And if the comparison be made between the conduct of others, and this salvation, the result is expressed by the Apostle to Titus as follows; "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by

the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

Having made these important statements to which we have attended, the Apostle proceeds in the conclusion of our text, to speak of the vast utility of the appearing of Jesus Christ in our world, which was to make those things manifest by abolishing death and bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel.

It is perfectly consistent with the nature of things, and with common observation, that the manifestation of things is subsequent to their being established in the counsel of him who ordains them. And as it would be a mistake of no small magnitude to attribute to the manifestation of things, the cause of their existence, so it is an error of extensive magnitude, to attribute to the manifestation or appearance of Jesus Christ, and what he did in our world, the cause of that gift which was made sure to us, in him, before the world began.

The divine truths taught by the Saviour, the doctrine of God's love to sinners, the forgiveness of sins, were all as true before the birth, preaching, and sufferings of Jesus, as they have been since. The glorious doctrine of the resurrection and of future eternal life was as true before the process of Jesus commenced, as since. This accounts for all the passages which represent our Saviour as the faithful and true witness. It agrees with his own words to Pilate; "For this cause was I born, and to this end came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." And the same thing is meant by St. Paul to the Romans; "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

It seems that all which the Saviour did, was designed as a manifestation of those divine things, which our heavenly Father had given us before the world began. *Things that had* been kept secret from the foundation *of the world* were made known when this sun

of righteousness arose with healing in his beams. So does the rising sun, which makes our natural day, manifest the surrounding objects, which the darkness of night had obscured from our sight.

The resurrection of Jesus made manifest the abolition of death. It brought to open light what was shown unto Moses at the bush, when God said; "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him."

Our text informs us, that Jesus Christ hath not only abolished death, but hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This form of expression fully acknowledges that life and immortality were divine facts in the economy of God before the coming of Christ, but that his process was necessary to make these glorious things known to mankind.

To conclude, the arguments to which we have attended are designed to show that the common notion of saving mankind from the wrath and curse of God in the eternal world is without foundation, either in scripture or reason; and that according to the scriptures our immortality and eternal life were established in the economy of divine wisdom before man existed. Also, that the salvation which the gospel of Jesus Christ effects for us, is a salvation from our sins, from our wanderings, from the darkness of our deceived minds, from all uncleanness, to righteousness, to reconciliation to God, to the knowledge of the truth, and to holiness of life.

And if it be asked, what there is for us to do, if we believe this doctrine, we reply in the words of divine truth, which have been already noticed. "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

Furthermore, if we be asked, what reward we may expect for our careful attention to these virtues, we

again reply; In keeping the commandments there is great reward. Great peace have they that love the law, and nothing shall offend them. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance forever."

LECTURE XVIII

EXPLANATION OF MATT. XXIV. AND XXV.

MATTHEW xxv. 46.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

WHILE calling the attention of this congregation to the consideration of this portion of our Saviour's testimony, many difficulties are presented to the mind of the speaker; some of which it may be profitable to name.

1. The long established use and application of this text, by commentators, preachers, and all denominations of christians stand in direct opposition, in one important particular, to the use and application which your servant feels himself obligated to make of it. The particular alluded to is the applying of this text to a future state of our existence. And to this may be added another particular, nearly as universally assented to as the former, which is the belief that this text proves the endless duration of misery.

2d. The power of tradition in the human mind forms the most material difficulty which seems to oppose our attempt to bring the true meaning of our Saviour, in the passage before us, to the hearer's understanding. It is vain, my friends, to pretend that we are free in our minds, from the force of education. Indeed we ought not to be. We were wisely so constituted, that what we imbibe in our youth should fix a lasting prepossession in our minds, in favor of opinions which are *recommended* by our instructors, and against those *which* we have been taught to view erroneous. But *we should* do well to consider, that while it is acknowledged that great benefits arise from this natural and

necessary bias of the human mind, it is equally true, that it may often so happen as to produce effects most pernicious. Solomon says; "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Here the author relies on the force of education, and gives a most wholesome advice to those who have the charge of children, to bring them up in the way they should go. And it is furthermore evident that the recommendation designed to guard against the unhappy effects of the same power in a case where an erroneous education should be imposed on youth.

Having been taught in our tender years that our heavenly Father has ordained a state of the most dreadful torment in the future state for those who are sinners in this world, and having been instructed at the same time to apply the text under consideration, together with almost all passages of scripture, which speak of the punishment of the wicked to this future state of misery, it has become as habitual for the mind to apply such passages to this future misery, as to apply the names London, Boston, and Philadelphia to the Cities of these names; or as to apply the names Washington, Franklin, and Adams to the distinguished statesmen of these names.

Under these circumstances, the opposer of divine truth has nothing to do, but to rest upon the prejudice of the public mind. He comes forward with all possible assurance and boldly asserts that our Saviour has laid it down in the most solemn and unequivocal manner that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned;" laying an emphasis on the damnatory term that causes our nerves to tremble. He depends entirely on the prepossessions of the public mind to apply this damnation to a future state; an application in no way intimated by our Saviour, and by no means intimated by any words in connexion with the passage.

In the same way the preacher, who applies our text *to a state of punishment* in the future world, manages *with the prejudice* of his hearers. He says; the

divine teacher himself has told us, that at the last judgment, when all the dead are raised and brought to the tremendous bar of God, the sinner will be placed on the left hand, and sentenced to everlasting punishment. He depends entirely on the blind prejudice of his hearers' minds to justify his assertions, and the application he makes of the text. There is not a word in the text nor in any part of its connexions, that intimates any thing about a resurrection of any from the dead, or that the judgment treated of in this chapter is the last judgment, or that any part of the subject belongs to a future state.

But notwithstanding the embarrassments which have been named, and another which is by no means inconsiderable, the very limited abilities of the speaker, which are sensibly felt as inadequate to make a proper arrangement of the momentous subject before us, and altogether unequal to the task of contending against the host of prejudices which are marshalled against the simplicity that is in Christ, yet there are two considerations which are highly encouraging. The testimony of Jesus which lies before us, and which stands connected with our text makes our subject so very plain that it seems to promise conviction to every mind; and the remarkable candor which has characterised this congregation, while attending to this course of lectures, gives that support to the speaker, without which he would have been discouraged.

It may be well for us to raise some queries respecting the general use of this portion of scripture, by which the mind of the hearer may be the better prepared to seek for its true application.

1st. As this passage is usually applied to a future state, let us ask whether in order to justify such an application it be not indispensable that some part of the testimony in connexion with the text should designate that it belongs, not to this state, but to a future *world*? For instance, should the speaker, this evening contend that this twenty-fifth of Matthew treated of things which took place before Noah's flood, should you not feel justisfied in opposing such an ex-

travagant statement by saying, that there is not a single intimation in the whole chapter that gives any countenance to it? You certainly would. Then be so candid, kind hearer, as to acknowledge, that in order to justify the application of this scripture to a future state of existence, there must be found something in the testimony that so applies it.

2d. As it is the current opinion, that in order for the accomplishment of the judgment treated of in this chapter, all the dead must be raised, have we not a right to contend, that in order to support this opinion, the resurrection of the dead should be distinctly stated somewhere in the general account?

If the speaker should now say, that according to the testimony of the Saviour concerning the judgment in the 25th of Matthew, the gift of speech will be given to all the beasts, to all the birds, and to all the fishes; and that at that time we shall hear them all talk in our native language, if you thought proper to refute such a visionary notion, would it not be sufficient to say that there is nothing in the chapter or its connexion that gives any authority for such a statement? It is hoped then that you will acknowledge, that if it be allowed that all the dead will be raised before the judgment, recorded in this chapter, can take place, we must be able to find authority for this opinion in the account before us.

3d. As it is held that the judgment of which we read in this chapter is the last judgment, is it not very proper that we should be able to find some proof of this idea in some part of the testimony of the divine instructor?

But in relation to these particulars, we feel confident in what has already been said, that there is no intimation in the whole account before us, that this judgment is the last judgment, or that the dead will be raised to be brought to it, or that it relates to a future state.

The attention of the hearer is now solicited to the *following statements,* which the speaker expects to *prove in this discourse!*

1st. The time of the judgment under consideration, is confined to the generation in which our Saviour lived on earth, according to his own testimony.

2d. The Jews, as a people, who rejected the gospel of Christ, and persecuted his apostles were those who were sentenced to everlasting punishment. And,

3d. Those who believed in Jesus and received the testimony, and administered to the necessities of his persecuted Apostles, were those that were blessed with life eternal.

The better to bring those statements, accompanied with their proper proofs, before the mind of the hearer, we shall commence our examination of the divine testimony where the subject before us seems to begin. This is in the latter part of the 23d chapter.

It seems that Jesus was in the temple where he addressed the Scribes and Pharisees, calling them hypocrites, blind guides, serpents, and a generation of vipers. He then proceeds to testify to them the judgment which would come upon them, and the occasion of it. "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacarias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation."

Be so good, my friends, as to remember this declaration of the Saviour. He here speaks of the most tremendous judgment that ever fell on mankind, and he confines the time to that generation. He then lamented over Jerusalem, spake of its desolation, and said; "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Here ends the 23d chapter, and the 24th commences *by* informing us that "Jesus went out, and departed *from* the temple: and his disciples came to him, for *to show him* the buildings of the temple. And Jesus

said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Here it is evident, that Jesus alluded to the event of which he had been speaking to the Scribes and Pharisees, which was the calamitous destruction and desolation of their city.

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

Here let us carefully notice what is embraced in the questions proposed by the disciples. They asked the divine master, when the things which he had denounced on the Jews should take place. And also, what would be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world.

In reply to these questions, Jesus delivered all that is recorded in the remainder of this, and the following chapter. So that in order to understand what he meant in the 25th we must preserve the connexion of the subject, which evidently commences in the 23d, and continues to the end of the 25th.

Jesus replies; "Take heed that no man deceive you: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet."

Here let us carefully inquire what Jesus meant by the *end?* Did he here speak of the end of what the disciples asked him? No doubt. For if they asked him concerning the end of the world, and he, in his reply, spake of the end of something else, and not of the end of the world, the answer was calculated to deceive. It is evident, therefore, that when Jesus said, as has been quoted; "the end is not yet," he meant that the *end of the* world, of which his disciples asked *him, was not yet.*

He proceeds; "For nation shall rise against nation, *and kingdom against* kingdom; and there shall be

famines and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And, because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." The end of what? Answer, the end of the world, of which the disciples asked him.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The end of what? The end of the world. Observe, the disciples asked Jesus concerning the end of the world, and he replies to their query. He speaks of the *end* three times. He first says; "the end is not yet;" secondly, he says; "He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved; and lastly, he says; "then shall the end come." And as the end of the world was the only end spoken of, we feel safe in believing that Jesus meant to speak of what his disciples meant by the end of the world.

A hope is entertained that the attention of the hearer will be successful in obtaining a clear understanding of what is here meant by the end of the world. We have been in the habit, by means of our early education, of supposing that by the end of the world here mentioned, the destruction of the natural world was intended. And this is now the general opinion. Religious people suppose that the end of the world, of which mention is made in this chapter, means the end of this material system. And they expect that the earth, the sun, and the moon, will be literally destroyed. The speaker is apprehensive that many now in *this* congregation have these views; and consequently *suppose* that when Jesus said; "Then shall the end *come*, he meant the same thing as has been held up by *our* christian divines, and preached upon so much

and made a common topic in those frequent discourses, the objects of which were to terrify people with the thoughts of seeing the earth burn up, the dead coming out of their graves to judgment, and the wicked plunged into hell.

My dear friends, if these are your views, your servant feels no disposition to censure you, he knows too well the effects of tradition to blame any one for these notions; but you are now called on to exercise that reason which distinguishes us from beasts, and constitutes us the favored subjects of a divine revelation, so that you may be able to form a correct judgment of the subject now before you. Let us carefully proceed with the testimony of Jesus, and endeavor to learn the events with which he connects and designates the end of the world.

"When ye therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." When does Jesus direct them that be in Judea to flee into the mountains? Answer, At the end of the world. But if the end of the world mean what tradition has taught us, why should those that may be in Judea at the time, when this earth is to be dissolved, and all the dead raised to judgment, flee into the mountains?

But we proceed. "Let him which is on the house top not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day; for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be." We have been told that there will be an eternity of trouble, after the end of the world, infinitely greater than any that ever preceded; but here in the description of the end of the world, by *Jesus himself, he says,* there shall never be such a time *of trouble afterward.*

By the peculiar description to which we have attend-

ed, there is no reason to doubt that the Saviour was giving an account of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. And it is evident, beyond all controversy, that all that was meant by the end of the world, was the end of the Jewish polity, and the destruction of the nation, the city and temple. That the hearer may be further satisfied, that by "the end of the world" is not meant what our tradition has taught, we notice the words of St. Paul to the Hebrews. Speaking of Jesus he says; "But now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The end of the world here meant was the end of the Levitical priesthood.

The Saviour further says; "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Here carefully observe that Jesus speaks of the sign of his coming, and also of his coming with power and great glory; and of his sending forth his angels, &c. Let us here ask the question, how we shall time the event here spoken of? Has this event ever taken place? Tradition says, No, but it will take place at the dissolution of this earth. But what right have we to time this event? If Jesus did not time it, have we a right to? And if Jesus has timed it, have we a right to alter the time? Hear his words.

"Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When its branches are yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

By this plain, undoubtful testimony of the divine teacher we are authorised to believe that the time of which he spake, when he should come in his glory with his angels was in the generation in which he lived. He had just before told the Pharisees that all the righteous blood shed upon the earth should come upon them, and was particular in saying: "Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation." And now when speaking of his coming in his glory with his angels, he says; "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

The Saviour proceeds to inform his disciples, that the particular day and hour of his coming were known to his Father only; and in the whole of the remaining part of the chapter he refers the events of which he speaks to the time he had before designated and confined to that generation. This 24th chapter ends with an account of what should be done to an evil servant, who should "say in his heart, my lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and to drink with the drunken: the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." As he had just before, in his address to the Scribes and Pharisees, called them hypocrites, and denounced the judgments of heaven upon them, he now informed his disciples, that if any who professed to be his servants, should get off their watch, should say, my Lord delayeth his coming, and should eat and drink with the drunken, and abuse his fellow servants, he should be placed among the hypocrites on whom he had denounced those judgments.

The 25th chapter begins with the word *then*, by which it it evident that the speaker meant to refer to the time he had before designated. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." *When did the* Saviour say the kingdom of heaven

should be likened unto ten virgins? Answer, at the time when those judgments should come on Jerusalem and on the Jews, of which he had spoken; all of which he confined to that generation. When he should come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, and send his angels forth to gather together his elect; all which he confined to that generation.

This parable of the virgins was designed to represent the difference there would be between the situations of those Jews who foolishly rejected the Saviour, and who abused his Apostles, and those who believed in him, and administered to the necessities of the promulgators of his doctrine.

The parable of the talents, which follows this of the ten virgins, represents the same thing, and so does this of the sheep and the goats.

This passage begins thus; "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," &c.

Here be cautious, "When the Son of man shall come," &c. When was this? Look back to the 30th verse of the 24th chapter. "And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," &c. And then observe that the Saviour took all possible pains to certify his disciples that all these things should take place in that generation.

The whole subject is perfectly plain. In the 24th chapter Jesus spake of his coming in his glory with his angels, and also of the judgment that he would then execute on his enemies; and here in the 25th chapter, he represents these things and events by the parable of the virgins, that of the talents, and this of the sheep and goats; and by keeping the connexion of the subject it appears evident beyond all doubt, that this parable alluded to the events which took place in the generation in which he lived.

But if this subject had been left in any respect doubtful, respecting the time of this judgment, yet other passages of our Saviour's testimony respecting the same event are perfectly sufficient to settle the question and to remove all doubts.

See Matt. xvi. 27, 28, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Mark viii. 38. ix. 1. "Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me, and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels. And he said unto them, verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Luke ix. 26, 27, "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God."

These passages fully and clearly show, that the coming of Christ in his glory with his angels, to reward every man according to his works, was an event which took place in the generation that lived at the time that Jesus was on the earth. And we have another direct proof of this fact recorded in Matt. x. 22, 23, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come."

The time of this judgment being thus settled, let us inquire what accusation was brought against those on the left hand for which they were sentenced to everlasting punishment? The accusation runs thus: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat:

was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." The accused ask when these things took place; and are told; "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me." Notice here, that Jesus was delivering this whole discourse to his disciples alone, on the mount of Olives. By *these*, therefore, it is evident that he meant his disciples; and he gave them to understand, that the persecutions that they should suffer, he would reckon as done to himself. And on the other hand, the righteous are justified for having done those things to the disciples of Christ, which the wicked had neglected to do; and he accepts these acts of kindness as done to himself.

We will here ask those, who apply this subject to the future state, whether they will allow that we are to obtain an immortal state of endless felicity for the performance of our duty, in administering to the wants of our fellow creatures? The fact is, after they have made such an application of this scripture, they do not believe that our immortal state of happiness is the reward of our good works here.

But we must attend to the argument of our opposers, who contend, that the words of this text necessarily mean an endless duration.

Everlasting punishment, and life eternal. They are critical to observe, that the words everlasting and eternal come from the same word in the Greek Testament, and they, therefore, infer that the duration of punishment must be as long as the duration of happiness in the future world. But they assume the application of these words to a future state, without even an attempt to show, that such an application is justified by the testimony of the Saviour. This application we have proved to be erroneous; which necessarily applies the word rendered everlasting and eternal to what belongs to the present state. And that this application is correct we prove as follows: The word in Greek, rendered everlasting and eternal in our language, is *aioonion*, which is an adjective. The noun occurs in

the question which the disciples asked the divine master, in the 3d verse of the 24th chapter: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the (*aioonos*) world?" Now we have proved that the end of the *aioonos*, in the 24th chapter meant the end of the Jewish dispensation. It follows therefore, by fair analogy, that if the *aioonos*, which came to an end in the generation that Jesus lived on the earth, meant a dispensation or order of things, that which followed meant the same (viz.) a dispensation or order of things.

The plain simple truth is this; The dispensation and order of the Jewish economy ended, and the gospel dispensation and economy commenced; and so did the dispensation of that long and severe judgment on the house of Israel, under which they have groaned until this day.

We therefore render the text thus; "These shall go away into a dispensation of punishment, but the righteous into a dispensation of life, or into the gospel dispensation. This gospel dispensation or *aioonos*, is mentioned by the Saviour, in Matt. xxviii. 20, "Where Jesus sent forth his disciples to preach, and said to them; Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the (*aioonos*) world."

The hearer is referred to PARKHURST'S Greek Lexicon, where on this word he will find the following; "An age, period, periodical dispensation of divine Providence. In Matt. xxiv. 3, it evidently refers to the Jewish age, or age under the Mosaic law. (See Whitby, Dodridge, and Macknight on that text.) But in Matt. xxviii. 20, it seems plainly to denote the age under the Messiah."

When this subject is seen in its own clear light, when we look at it with the eye of unprejudiced candor, and view it in its relation to the threatenings denounced by Moses on the rebellious house of Israel, we see that Jesus denounced on the Jews no other punishment than such as Moses and the Prophets had foretold. If the hearer will examine the 26th chapter

of Leviticus, the 28th of Deuteronomy, the 4th of Lamentations, and compare them with the 24th and 25th of Matthew, he will be satisfied that neither Moses, the Prophets, nor Jesus spake any thing of punishing the house of Israel in a future state of existence; but he will be convinced that not only Moses and the Prophets, but Jesus likewise did denounce the most awful and distressing calamities on the Jews, that we can possibly conceive of human sufferings in this world of misery and woe.

When Pilate, being convinced of the innocence of Jesus, would have released him, all the people answered, saying, "His blood be on us and on our children." They pronounced the dreadful imprecation and were taken at their word. God has visited the iniquity of the fathers upon the children of them who have hated him, and has executed on the wicked the judgments which were foretold by the prophets.

But all this seems nothing in the eye of that blind superstition, which can see no punishment for sin in this world, and which applies the threatenings to a future state. But in the judgment of reason, and in the light of divine revelation, the punishments which have been inflicted on the Jews for the wickedness with which scripture and history charge them, have been according to their sins.

As to the argument, that punishment must be as durable as happiness, it not only seems to be destitute of any evidence, but repugnant to reason. Punishment is designed to reclaim from sin, that happiness may succeed; but if punishment be endless it certainly is the *end* of divine Providence, and not the *means* by which he brings a more glorious *end* to pass.

To conclude: my friends, the dealings of God with his children in past ages, should be regarded by us as examples of his faithfulness to his promises and his threatenings. As our heavenly Father has always rewarded the righteous, and punished the wicked in a way to make his approbation of the former and his disaprobation of the latter evident to every observing *mind*, let us be wise for ourselves and for our children.

If we approve the opportunity which God has offered us, to throw off error and superstition, and to receive Christ and his pure religion, we shall enter into life; and our children after us, in room of inheriting from us, error and darkness, will bless their fathers and their mothers, who resolved to throw off the doctrine of despair, and to espouse the hope of the gospel of God our Saviour.

LECTURE XIX.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WICKEDNESS RECOMPENSED ON EARTH.

PROVERBS xi. 31.

Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner.

Among the reasons for calling your attention at this time, to the consideration of this subject, the following may be named:

1. This passage having been made the subject of one of our discourses on the 1st Sabbath of November last, a number, who heard the discourse at that time, have since requested that it might have a place among the lectures. And

2. This subject seems so nearly allied to our last, that it is thought advisable to place it next in course, that it may operate in some measure as a farther illustration of it.

Our text gives evident support to the following particular subjects:

1. There is righteousness in the earth.
2. There is wickedness in the earth.
3. There is a sure recompense for righteousness.
4. There is a sure recompense for wickedness.
5. The recompense of righteousness is in the earth.
6. The recompense of wickedness is in the earth.

These particulars may be said to be fully proved by the text; for there can be none righteous, unless there be righteousness, and there can be none wicked, unless there be wickedness; nor can righteousness be recompensed when there is none, nor can wickedness be recompensed where it does not exist.

The hearer's attention is now invited to an inquiry, which will be directed to ascertain how to make a proper distinction between the righteous and the wicked. The way in which this subject is generally held, supposes that there is one class of men who are exclusively righteous, and another class exclusively wicked. Hence we hear so much about two classes of mankind. Christian preachers and commentators have filled their sermons and their volumes with lengthy and intricate descriptions of these two classes of people. If we say any thing of the divine favor to all mankind, if we express the least hope that God will have compassion on all men, if we bring plain scripture to testify and say, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works," we are severely rebuked by those who call themselves righteous, who tell us that the scriptures every where make two classes of people, the righteous and the wicked.

That the scriptures speak of two characters is freely acknowledged; but that they every where or even any where give support to the notion that one class of mankind is exclusively righteous, and another class exclusively wicked is by no means acknowledged.

It is worthy of special notice that the testimony of scripture agrees with matter of fact. For instance, scripture says: "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Now the matter of fact testified by the passage quoted, perfectly agrees with what we know by experience to be true. But should we find that the scriptures any where say, that while the earth remaineth there shall be a certain class of people, from generation to generation that shall be exclusively righteous, and another class exclusively wicked, could we say that this is evidently true? could we say that these two classes have always been as distinguishable as seed time and harvest, as cold and heat, as summer and winter, and as day and night?

My friends look round you: do you know who these righteous are? Can you distinguish this righteous class

from the wicked class as easily as you can distinguish day from night? Who are they? Are they that company of meek, humble believers in Jesus, who pray as the divine Master taught them; "Our Father who art in heaven—forgive us our sins?" If they are not sinners why do they pray that their sins may be forgiven?

On the other hand, who are the wicked? Are they that company of profane sailors, who appear so careless about religion? But these men, of all grades of society, are acknowledged to be the most generous. They will impart to misery the last dollar of the scanty wages for which they have risked their lives on the uncertain deep, while the wealthy Christian, who goes to the sanctuary in splendor, with great circumspection, gives to poverty a shilling. But who are the wicked? Are they such as make no profession of religion, have subscribed to no creed, joined no church? But where are these men, and what are they about when their neighbors are sick, or are in want, or are in distress? Are they then carelessly loitering behind our high professors of religion, who are administering all needed assistance to the distressed? Where are they when the devouring element turns women and children into the streets? Do they idly fold their arms and look on, while the righteous put out the fire? What do these wicked people do when their country is invaded by a plundering foe, and all that is dear to man lies at stake? Do they then sleep on beds of down, while the saints watch in the camp? The fact is, if we are willing to acknowledge the truth, there is no class of people who are so righteous that there is no need of reformation; nor is there a class that is in no danger of growing worse.

We find the righteous and the wicked in the same individual. David says; "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness." And again he says; "The Lord rewardeth me according to my righteousness." But with what humility does he acknowledge his sin. He says; "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my

transgression and my sin is ever before me." Yes, in the same man, and at the same time we find the righteous and the wicked, "him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." St. Paul says; "With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

The habit which professed Christians have so long indulged, of thinking and speaking of the wicked, as a class of people distinct from themselves is a proof of the depravity of their own deceived hearts. The publican, who dared not raise his eyes toward heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, was rather justified than the Pharisee, who thanked God that he was not like other men.

The result of a candid examination of this particular subject may be represented by health and sickness. And as this representation is warranted by the declaration of the Saviour to those who thought they were righteous when they were not, it may be the more acceptable. Jesus said, "They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick." Now health and sickness are so directly opposite, that there is no difficulty in distinguishing one from the other. But there are many cases where it would be difficult to determine which of two that are sick is the most unwell. And we may further observe, that there is no such thing as a class of people who are exclusively healthy, nor a class that is exclusively sickly. Those, who to-day are in health, may be sick to-morrow; and those who are indisposed to-day may be restored and enjoy health to-morrow. Yes, and in the same person, and at the same time, we may find a degree of health and a degree of sickness. Degrees of health and sickness may increase or decrease, and the subjects may either recover, or decline and die.

Let us in the next place endeavor to ascertain the nature of the recompense which the divine economy awards to the righteous, and what it is designed for.

As we have seen that there are different degrees in righteousness, so we may expect to find that rewards are so *varied as* to correspond with these different

degrees. Again, we may observe that in some things a man may do that which is right, and receive a recompense accordingly; on the other hand, the same man may do that which is wrong in some things and be recompensed accordingly.

The whole duty of man is embraced in two divine requirements. The first requires us to love God with all the heart, and the second, being like unto the first, requires us to love our neighbors as ourselves. On these two commandments, Jesus says, "hang all the law and the prophets." Now as far as any person loves God so far is he recompensed, and no farther. And as far as he loves his neighbor so far he is recompensed in that respect, and no farther.

But what is the recompense which the soul enjoys who loves God? Answer, it is God himself. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." In an exact proportion to the love which the heart exercises towards God is it recompensed with this richest of all rewards. There is no other object, on which the affections of the heart can be placed, that is so sure of returning a recompense, in all respects equal to the degree of love which is exercised.

Companions may love each other most tenderly, but by unavoidable circumstances they may be separated, so as to render their affection even painful. Again, there may be love to creature objects where no return of affection is received. But whoever loves God cannot be separated from him, nor can he ever experience any want of love in God. The soul that truly loves the divine Being is blessed with the presence of the object of affection. There is no place nor condition that can exclude the mind from this enjoyment. Though we were banished from the society of man, if we loved God he would be present with us; would be a well of water springing up into everlasting life. How often do we see our brethren and sisters in the hour of death, rejoicing in a present Saviour, and cheerfully resign life and all earthly things for the *enjoyment* of God.

What is this rich recompense designed for in the divine economy? It is designed for the only end that divine love can possibly have in view. It is to promote love and enlarge its enjoyments in the soul that is exercised by it.

As there are secondary cases in which righteousness manifests itself, so there are secondary recompenses corresponding with them. As consequences growing out of love to God, we notice those virtuous actions, and propriety of conduct, which are attended with effects which sufficiently recompense and amply bless the agent in his deeds. Whoever loves God, will love truth; he will love honesty; he will love justice; he will love mercy; he will love wisdom and knowledge. Now as he loves these things, he will speak the truth; he will be honest; he will do justly; he will be merciful; he will endeavor to acquire wisdom and knowledge, and he will consider all these things as durable riches and righteousness.

Now as these virtues are all calculated to reward us for all our exertions in their principles, so it is evident that our recompenses must be according to our merits. Accordingly as a man loves the truth, and speaks the truth, he enjoys the divine sunshine in his breast; and in addition to this sure and ample reward, he generally is believed by others, and confidence is placed in his word. In the same proportion as a man is honest in what he does, he has the enjoyment of his own conscience, which is a treasure that the honest man prizes far above silver or gold. And in addition to all this he has the satisfaction of being esteemed by others for his honesty, which is worthy of high estimation.

Those who do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, who seek for wisdom as for hidden treasures, and find out knowledge of witty inventions, enjoy a constant income of moral and intellectual wealth, which is far richer than the revenue of silver, or the merchandise of the most precious spices.

The design of these rich rewards, in the economy of the divine government, is to induce moral beings to labor with all possible diligence to perfect themselves in the love of God.

We may now ask what recompense the divine government is pleased to render to the wicked, and what is the design of such a recompense.

As wickedness is exactly the reverse of righteousness, so the recompense of the former must be the reverse of that of the latter.

If we have no love to God we cannot enjoy him. The thought that he exists and exercises universal dominion, and controls all things by his almighty power is a source of infelicity. The soul, in room of being refreshed with the sweet waters of life, is suffused with anger, wrath, strife, and bitterness. In the room of peace, there is trouble. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

Such is the establishment of moral rectitude in the human soul, by the hand of our Maker, that our reason is compelled to acknowledge the dignity of divine justice, the purity of all the virtues, and the excellency of righteousness. But where the affections of the heart are not devoted to these holy qualities, the soul is forever under condemnation. Self-accusation and self-reproach gnaw like the vulture within.

In an exact proportion to the distance the soul is in, from that love to God and our neighbor, which is the fulness of the divine requirement, is measured the recompense due to the sinner. There is tribulation and anguish to every soul of man that doeth evil; and this tribulation and anguish are in proportion to the evil for which they are a recompense.

But why should the divine government so ordain, that sin should be recompensed with so much misery? Why does it not please God to administer comfort, peace, and joy, to the sinner, in his sins? What is the design of the divine economy in this thing?

We may find a solution of these queries in our similitude of health and sickness. Health is the reward of that kind of food, which is nourishment to the body, of that temperance and exercise which our nature *requires;* while food that is unwholesome, or that is

rendered injurious by art, together with intemperance, and the want of proper exercise, are recompensed with those natural disorders with which the human body is afflicted. It is necessarily so in the nature of things. It seems impossible that it should be otherwise. And it is the certainty of these consequences, which induces the prudent to abstain from intemperance and idleness.

The evil consequences resulting from wrong practices are designed, by divine wisdom, for the same benevolent purpose as the good effects which are the recompense of doing well. When we do well we enjoy the pleasant fruits of righteousness, and this enjoyment operates as an inducement to continue in well doing. On the contrary, when we do wrong we suffer the recompense of our error, and this suffering is wisely appointed as a mean to wean us from that improper indulgence of inordinate appetites and passions in consequence of which we suffer, and to warn us to take heed to our ways. The prophet Jeremiah, speaking to the wicked, seems to express this idea with great plainness. He says; "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee."

In our reasoning on the subjects of the recompensing of the righteous, and of rendering to the wicked according to their works, attention has been paid more to what we may term the internal fruits of righteousness and sin, than to outward blessings and calamities with which divine Providence has in all ages of the world expressed his approbation of righteousness, and his disapprobation of sin. We shall now contemplate the subject more generally, noticing some of the divine promises and threatenings, connecting the subject with the consideration of that part of the testimony of our text which informs us, that the recompense of both the righteous and the wicked is in the earth.

It may be proper, before we proceed further, to apprise the hearer, that the arguments which are to follow will be found directed to disprove the common doctrine, which teaches that those who are righteous in this state of existence, will be recompensed for their righteousness with immortality and eternal life in the

future state; and that those who are sinners in this life will be recompensed with endless perdition hereafter. This we feel fully authorised to undertake by the divine authority expressed in many more passages than can be cited in one sermon; this authority is evidently expressed in our text, in that it certifies us that both the righteous and the wicked shall be recompensed in the earth; for it surely seems unreasonable to suppose, that they are recompensed here in the earth, and after this recompensed to all eternity. In fact this idea is a most palpable absurdity; for any thing short of deserts is not a recompense; nor can that which is more than deserts be called a recompense.

With a view to bring this general subject before the hearer in as plain a manner as is convenient, let a few questions be asked, and let reason and experience answer them.

1. In a state like this, in which we are possessed of inclinations, passions, and appetites, which, if not properly chastened, duly restrained, and wisely governed, will most assuredly lead us into sin, in order to influence the mind, and bring its fortitude into proper action, and the inclinations into the right channel by the hope of a favorable recompense, it is best to place this recompense in this present life, or in a future state? Professors of religion in general, and even preachers contend, that unless the recompense for well doing is in a future state, virtue is not worth pursuing, as there is not in virtue itself and in its good consequences in this life a sufficient reward for its duties. The question now before us inquires whether it would not better secure the object to have the recompense in this life? In favor of its being here may be urged, that all objects that are calculated to influence the human mind, have their powers increased by their proximity to us, and diminished as they are placed more remote. Man is so constituted that he thinks more of his present necessities than he does of what he may want in some future time.

If you wish to hire laborers into your service, you *can more* readily obtain them by promising them their

pay every setting sun, than if you propose paying them ten or twenty years hence. If your neighbor, or even your minister should tell you, that if you wish to obtain faithful laborers, you must by no means promise them immediate pay, but promise it as long hence as will possibly suit your conveniences; and furthermore, you must be careful when they are laboring for you, to allow them as little refreshment and rest as possibly will keep them alive, or they will leave you, would you think the advice was any evidence of the wisdom and experience of him who gave it? No, you would not. And though you might possibly think your adviser meant well, being ignorant, you would not follow the advice.

Why then, my friends, should we believe, that divine wisdom, with an intention to engage us in the service of virtue, should place its reward in a future state of existence, in a world we know nothing of, from which no traveller ever returned?—Why should we believe, that the wisdom of God, with a design to make us faithful in his service, should carefully make this service extremely toilsome, and allow us no rest nor refreshment that is comfortable during our labors?

2. With a view to operate on the mind by fear, and to restrain the passions by apprehensions of danger, where would wisdom place the dreaded object? in this life, or in a future state?

In favor of its being here, and before our eyes, may be urged, that any terrific object has a greater influence on the mind being near and visible, than when remote and invisible. Even a coward will boast of his courage, and will dare the foe, while he lies at a distance and out of sight, but when the hostile band presents the glittering armory that dazzles his eyes, his weak heart melts like wax before the sun. Why then should terror be placed at a distance and out of sight in order to have the greatest effect on the mind? If it be necessary to excite our fear, that we believe in the common doctrine of a burning lake in a future state, would it not add an incalculable influence to the object if our terrific preachers could draw away the cur-

tain and present the horrible scene to our open vision? As they take great satisfaction in describing to the imagination of parents their children in hell, would not the effect be still more powerful if the eye could behold the fiery pit, and see the beloved children in the flames? But all this must be carried on in a secret place, out of sight of all the living; and none to report it to us, only those who know nothing about it.

3. Is it not a most evident fact, that for temporal enjoyments, enjoyments of this life, men will exert their utmost powers, face the greatest dangers, and surmount all surmountable difficulties? For these enjoyments the husbandman labors from early morn until the shades of night cover him. And this he repeats day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, until he wears out his strength and his days. Ask him why he thus toils; will he inform you, either that he expects an immortal state of bliss hereafter as a reward; or that he fears eternal torments if he should quit his field? No, he will point to his wife and to his children, and say; it is for them I labor, for them I toil, and the love I bear them makes my labor easy and my burden light; yea it is a pleasure, and content is my companion.

Does not the mariner risk his life on the seas, does he not encounter the most inclement weather, put his face to the violence of the storm, for the sake of the comforts and luxuries of life? For the enjoyments of this temporal state, we see the warrior, far from his family, encountering the fatigues of marches and counter-marches; lying upon the cold damp earth; his food coarse and often loathsome, and when the hour of perilous danger arrives, and he is summoned to the charge, does he now expect immortality and eternal life if he fights, and does he dread endless damnation if he refuses? No, these are not the motives which stimulate him to set his face to danger and his breast to the battle. The defence of his country, the defence of his wife and children, and his honor as a soldier are motives sufficient. Why then, my friends, are we told that no rewards in this life are sufficient to excite

us to religion and virtue? Why are we told the pitiful story, that nothing short of the hope of endless happiness hereafter, and the dread of everlasting damnation in the world to come, are sufficient incentives to move men to subscribe to a creed which men have invented, and a covenant written by a clergyman, join a communion, and make a few prayers which he learns by heart, and go to meeting on the Sabbath?

4. Since the doctrine of endless rewards and punishments has been advocated and preached by the christian clergy, and the anathemas of eternal condemnation held up on every Sabbath-day; and since all classes of people have been habituated in such a belief, has it all together had the desired effect? Has it made men in reality any better? If we place the least confidence in the most authentic histories, and if we allow experience to judge in this case the matter is plain, that a spirit of the most violent persecution has always accompanied this doctrine, and the most shocking outrages on humanity have marked its progress.

5. Let us ask now, where true wisdom lies, and where her peaceful path is to be found? We find the answer in the words of Jesus, who said; "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." By these precious words we learn that the Saviour endeavored to persuade men into his service by assuring them that his service was easy, and that he imposed no burdens but light ones. He compares his religion with its opposite, as an easy service to one that is hard; as rest to fatigue.

As long as we are persuaded to believe that the way of righteousness is a hard way, that it is attended with constant trouble, that few or no enjoyments are found in obedience to its requirements, all the promises which the preacher holds up of bliss in a future world, will never induce us to travel the hated road. On the contrary, as long as we are told that sin and wickedness are *attended* with ease, pleasure, delight, and

perpetual gratification and satisfaction, and as long as we believe this worst of all deceptions, so long we shall live in sin, notwithstanding we may be told of the most horrid torments in a future world as a recompensé therefor.

Man loves happiness and hates misery, and this love and hatred are the only inducements which move him to action. Let us realize then that righteousness will make us happy in the present life, and that sin will make us miserable here on the earth, and let us constantly withstand the testimony of our preachers, and the temptations of the flesh to the contrary, and we shall live as the grace of God teaches, by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and by living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

It is worthy of special regard, that the divine promises and threatenings recorded by Moses and the prophets, with which God was pleased to signify his approbation of righteousness, and his disapprobation of sin, relate to blessings and punishments which have been enjoyed and suffered by the house of Israel in the earth.

For their encouragement the Lord promised them all manner of temporal blessings; and as a terror he threatened them with all manner of temporal calamities. And while they walked in the statutes of the Lord, and did his judgments these promises were faithfully fulfilled. The people multiplied greatly and abounded in all the rich blessings of life, of health and peace. But when they rebelled and walked in the way of sin, they were visited with all the plagues, judgments, and calamities with which they had been threatened. No people ever varied their character more than have the Jews. At times they were the most upright, the most pious, the most virtuous of all the nations of the earth; and then they were blessed above all people in the world. At other times they have been the most perverse; have so forsaken the true God, as to carry idolatry to its extremes, have practiced violence and oppression, by which they became a prey to their enemies, and were carried into

captivities, and punished with all the sore judgments which were written in their law or denounced by their prophets. And as no people have ever been more wicked, so none have been more punished than they.

The judgments which our Saviour denounced on the Jews were the same of which we read in the 26th of Leviticus and other writings of Moses, in the Lamentations of Jeremiah and the other writings of this and the rest of the prophets. And it is directly to our argument to observe that all these calamities have come on that people; and, that we have no more authority for applying either the promises for obedience, or the threatenings for disobedience to a future state, than we have for believing that the Jews, for their obedience in this world, will be blessed in the future state in the quiet possession of the land of Canaan: and for their disobedience will be visited with sickness and be carried away into captivity by their enemies.

To conclude. Let us, my friends, open our eyes on the certain consequences with which our heavenly Father rewards the obedient here in the earth. Let us regard that calm sunshine of peace within, which we are sure to enjoy as the reward of well doing. Let us endeavor to estimate in a proper manner the rich inheritance which is the certain lot of those who keep the commandments of God.

Let us look round us, and see if prisons, dungeons, and gallows are not a sufficient argument to prove, that the wicked are recompensed in the earth. And if this sad scene be not sufficient, go draw the veil from still greater horrors, where intemperance and uncleanness exhibit the warning spectacle of degraded humanity. Beloved youth, look, these terrors are no fictions; they are awful realities! Your feet stand in slippery places! O put on the whole armor of righteousness that ye may be able to stand in the evil day; and pray most fervently that you may not be led into temptation, but that you may be delivered from evil.

LECTURE XX.

DIVINE GOODNESS IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SODOMITES AND OTHER SINNERS.

EZEKIEL xvi. last of 50.

Therefore I took them away as I saw good.

THE spirit of divine truth, addressing Jerusalem by the prophet, informed her that she was more corrupted in her ways than her sisters, Samaria and her daughters, or Sodom and her daughters. The words of the prophet are these; "As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away as I saw good."

The destruction of the inhabitants of Sodom is the subject of our text, and that to which the most cautious attention of this christian audience is now most earnestly solicited.

By those who believe and preach the "heart-chilling doctrine" of endless torment, the destruction of Sodom is constantly adverted to as an evident proof of this tenet, and an instance of its positive reality.

Now as it is one of the objects of this course of lectures, to disprove the doctrine here mentioned, and to show, that the divine testimony which its advocates apply as proof of this tenet gives it no support, it is thought expedient to show that we have no evidence to believe that the Sodomites are an instance of an

endless state of misery. And as several other instances of the destruction of the wicked are generally used for the same end as this of the destruction of Sodom, notice will be taken of a number of them in the present discourse, in a way to show that they afford no evidence in support of the doctrine, in favor of which they are perpetually employed by our terrific preachers.

The first question which we shall attempt to examine is, whether the scriptures, which speak of the destruction of Sodom, give any account of the endless misery of those people who died in that destruction?

We are informed in the 18th and 19th chapters of Genesis, that, on account of the grievous sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."

This is the account which we have in Genesis of the destruction of the Sodomites. But we find no mention made of their being consigned to a state of torment after their temporal destruction.

Here let us bring our subject into the light by the following queries.

1. Of the two events, the temporal destruction of the Sodomites and their being consigned to a state of unspeakable torment in the invisible and eternal world, which is the greatest? Every one will acknowledge at once, that the last mentioned of these events is infinitely greater than the first. Indeed, those who believe and hold forth the idea of the endless misery of the wicked hereafter, always inform us, that all the sufferings of this mortal state are nothing compared with the sufferings of the miserable in the eternal world.

2. Why, allowing the common opinion of the miserable state of the Sodomites in the invisible world, is there a particular account given of their temporal destruction, and yet not a word about this everlasting *torment in the future* state, which is a subject infinite-

ly greater? To illustrate the nature of this question, we will suppose, that we have an account in our newspapers of a fire in the city of Philadelphia that burnt several ware-houses and consumed considerable property. This account falls into the hands of our christian preachers, and they come forward in public and state a most lamentable account of the total destruction of the city of Philadelphia by fire. They set forth, in the most moving language the awful sufferings of the wretched inhabitants of that city, not one of which were able to make their escape from the devouring flames! They even go so far as to inform us of certain manifestations of the tender sympathies of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters in the last sad moments of their dreadful destruction. After the peace of the whole town should be thus trifled with for some time, and all our hearts had been wrung with the keenest sorrow for the astonishing sufferings of our fellow mortals, some of us should ask our preachers how they were informed of the sorrowful news of the destruction of the inhabitants of Philadelphia?—They in a very careless indifferent manner, after a few civilities, inform us that we have had the account in the public papers; and ask us if we have not seen the account of the burning of those ware-houses and all the goods there were in them?—What should we think in such a case? Should we not allow ourselves to query whether these good teachers had not made some mistake? or exaggerated in a most unwarranted degree the account given in the papers? You will all agree that no excuse could possibly palliate for such a breach of our peace, except it could be proved that our teachers, who had thus troubled our souls, were actuated by a delirium. But my friends, even this comparison falls infinitely short of the subject under consideration. There is not so great a disproportion between the supposed account of the fire in Philadelphia, and the exaggeration of this account, which we have supposed, as there is between the account recorded in Genesis of the destruction of *the* Sodomites, and the exaggerations by which thou-

sands have been led to believe that those who were there destroyed, were consigned to a state of interminable misery. The question before you is like this; Would the public prints notice, in a particular manner, the burning of a few ware-houses in the city of Philadelphia, but say nothing of the burning of the whole city, inhabitants and all?

3. As it is acknowledged by all, who reason well on the relation between testimony and facts, and the legitimate powers of the former to establish the latter, that extraordinary and naturally incredible events require a strength of testimony and a clearness of evidence which correspond with the extraordinary character of what is to be proved, is it not our indispensable duty, and what we owe to ourselves and to the cause of truth, to ask our divines, who insist on the endless misery of the Sodomites, to produce evidence of this fact, the force and clearness of which are equal to the extraordinary character of this supposed fact?

That this supposed fact is naturally incredible appears most evident by comparing it with the manifest character of the divine Being. God is a being of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness.

We may suppose, that if God were infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, but entirely destitute of goodness, he might contrive a scheme of infinite cruelty, and carry the same into effect; but if he possess as much goodness as he does wisdom and power, it is palpably absurd to believe that he is the author of any being to whom he is not good; and it is equally absurd to say that God is good to the Sodomites if they are consigned to a state of infinite misery.

That our heavenly Father was good and bountiful to the inhabitants of Sodom in their mortal state is evident from our context, in which we are informed of the idleness of the people, their fulness of bread, and their criminal neglect of the poor and needy. These accusations fully show that they were guilty of abusing the goodness of divine Providence; by which it is clear that God was good to them. Now as it cannot be denied *that our* heavenly Father was good and

bountiful to the inhabitants of Sodom in their mortal state, is it consistent for us to believe that he is not good to them in the eternal world, if he there continues their existence? Where is the evidence that he, who alone can create, and preserve the existence of rational beings, ever does this to the damage of his creatures?

The plain truth is this; in room of having such clear and positive evidence in support of this common notion of the endless misery of the inhabitants of Sodom, as reason would require, there is not the most distant hint of any such thing, in the account recorded in Genesis.

There is a passage in the epistle of Jude, which speaks of Sodom and Gomorrah as follows; "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." This passage is frequently cited to prove that the eternal state of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah is miserable. Let us examine the passage and see if it afford any such conclusion. The words, "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," are supposed to support the opinion in dispute. In order to show that these words have no such meaning, we will notice two passages where St. Paul uses the words, "set forth." See Romans iii. 25. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." 1. Cor. iv. 9. "For I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and unto men." In both these passages, the words "set forth" evidently mean a most open and clear manifestation of that which was "set forth." But who will pretend that the eternal torments of the Sodomites, in the burning lake of the invisible world, are *set forth* for an example?

When God "set forth" his dear Son for a propitiation of our sins, thousands of witnessing eyes beheld him and saw his miracles of mercy; thousands of ears heard the gracious words which he spake, and thousands felt the life giving, and health restoring power of the Saviour. His whole process from his birth to his ascension was attested by many witnesses, who could not have made any material mistake respecting the subject of their testimony. But have we the testimony of a single individual, who has seen the Sodomites in torment since their destruction, or heard their groans? It is true, and it is spoken with regret, that our terrific preachers speak on this subject, with as much seeming assurance, and in terms as positive as does the historian who relates an account of which he is an eye witness.

The Apostles were "set forth;" and being "set forth," were a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men; and Sodom and Gomorrah were set forth for an example;" but who were the spectators? Who were the witnesses? Have angels and men seen them in the torments of the invisible world? No, there is no such thing; but we are informed, by the divine historian, that "Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord. And he looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." There can be no reasonable doubt that the destruction of the inhabitants of Sodom and the Cities of the plain was, "set forth" before the eyes of all the inhabitants of the surrounding country; and there can be no doubt but that it was considered by those who saw it, as a dispensation of divine Providence for the wickedness of the people. And it was recorded in the scriptures for an example, and a warning to the inhabitants of the earth not to practice their sins.

The fire which destroyed Sodom and the cities of the plain, is called eternal fire on account of the long time it continued in the country, and burned in those pits of slime of which we read in the account of the

battle between five kings on the part of Sodom and its confederates, and the four kings who went against them.

But the fact is we are assured in the most plain terms that the punishment of the sin of Sodom is not in a future state, but was executed on its inhabitants in a most sudden and expeditious manner. See Lam. iv. 6. "For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hand stayed on her." By this testimony we learn the following facts, which relate to the argument under consideration.

1. The punishment of the sin of Sodom, was their temporal destruction.

2. This overthrow, which was the punishment of their sins was executed in a very short time.

3. There was no protracted punishment executed on them after this sudden overthrow. This we learn from the concluding words of the passage quoted; "No hand stayed on her." And

4. This punishment of the sin of Sodom was less than the punishment of the iniquity of the house of Israel. And it is furthermore worthy of observation, that if the punishment of the sin of Sodom be endless misery, it is a most palpable absurdity to say, that the punishment of the iniquity of the house of Israel was greater. The punishment which the prophet describes, as being greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, was altogether the calamities of wars, famines, and other temporal judgments which came on the people for their iniquities. And by the prophet Ezekiel, in the place where our text is recorded, we have the reason given why the punishment of Jerusalem ought, in justice, to be greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom.

It is here stated that Jerusalem was more corrupted in all her ways, than Sodom.

Having fully proved, as far as any thing can be proved by the divine testimony, that the common opinion concerning the punishment of the Sodomites is not

only without foundation in scripture, but also in direct opposition to the plain testimony on the subject, we may now notice the words of our text, by way of the following inquiry.

As God says, by the prophet, in our text; "Therefore, I took them away as I saw good," what good was there effected by their being taken away in such a manner? The reason why they were taken away, was their sins. Now if they remained as great sinners after they were destroyed, as they were before, then the occasion of their being taken away was not removed by their destruction. Here then we see, what we always may notice in false notions of the ways of God. They always represent the divine Being as capable of acting without effect, or in a partial manner, or to a malevolent purpose. God destroyed the Sodomites because they were sinful; yet after their destruction they were no less sinful. Thus the object failed. After their destruction, as their sin remained, the Almighty consigned them to burning flames eternally, not to reform them, of course, but to vent on them his eternal wrath. Thus error represents the divine Being, revengeful and cruel.

A desire is felt, that the hearer would lend an attention to these questions, viz. Why should our heavenly Father manifest any disapprobation of sin? Does he suffer any inconvenience from it? Does the happiness of the sole Governor of the universe depend on the conduct of his creatures? Now as all will agree that the Almighty cannot be injured by sin, so it is reasonable to conclude that he forbids it because it is injurious to man; and it is reasonable also to conclude that the judgments, by which the divine disapprobation of sin is manifested, are designed to lessen and not to increase human misery. But will any one undertake to prove that human misery is lessened by inflicting unspeakable torments on mankind as long as God shall exist?

Let us, my friends, lay aside all the vain notions of tradition and superstition respecting our subject, notions which *suppose* that our Father in heaven is act-

ing the part of an implacable enemy to his own rational offspring, and let us listen to the language of our text; and let us realize it as the language of a kind and merciful Father. "Therefore I took them away as I saw good." My friends, how does this language sound to you? Does it carry any idea of unmerciful vengeance? No, it does not. But it gives a clear idea that God acted in this instance, consistently with his nature which is love, and with his character as a Father. He acted for the good of his creatures.

According to promise, we may now proceed to notice some other instances of the destruction of the wicked, which instances are generally used in support of the system of terror to which the destruction of the Sodomites is so universally applied.

The first we propose to examine is the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the red sea.

There has been and continues to be much dispute and opposition of opinion among divines, respecting God's raising up Pharaoh and hardening his heart for eternal destruction. Some insist that the Almighty, by a sovereign act, created Pharaoh for everlasting misery in the eternal world, and that he hardened his heart on purpose that he might commit sin enough to justify his endless condemnation. Others oppose such notions, and charge them with making God the author of sin. But they contend that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, was the sole author of his own sins and is justly sentenced to everlasting perdition together with all his host for disobedience in refusing to let the children of Israel go peaceably out of Egypt. Thus there is one darling point, in which, after they have opposed one another with all the arguments which they can possibly bring to bear on the subject in dispute, and after they have reciprocally censured each other for holding dangerous errors, they meet, and become perfectly quiet in the belief, that Pharaoh and his host are in the torments of hell, from which there is no deliverance.

That which these opposing divines dispute about is not embraced in the present object, to which this research is directed, but the point in which they both

meet, and concerning which they entertain no doubt, is the question now to be settled.

But how are we to obtain our object? The tradition of the church says, that Pharaoh and his host are in a state of endless torment. This tradition is now called in question. But how are we to bring this case to a fair decision? The following method is proposed. Let those divines, who hold and endeavor to maintain that Pharaoh and his host are in a state of endless misery pursuant to an eternal decree of God, and those who deny that tenet, but maintain that Pharaoh and his host are in this state of torment in consequence of abusing their moral agency drop their dispute, until they shall have proved that Pharaoh and his host are actually in such a state. And then let them all agree to believe nothing on this subject more than the divine testimony proves.

When this method is agreed to, the whole question is settled; for the fact is, there is no intimation in the scripture account that Pharaoh or any of his host were sufferers after they were drowned in the red sea.

It is a most humiliating thought, that our learned doctors of the church should so long maintain this phantom of their imagination, to the dishonor of God, and to the discomfort of every tender sensibility of the human heart.

But the day of trial and retribution is come; and this folly must be recompensed. It is true, they may turn away their faces, they may wish to avoid meeting these glaring absurdities; but the spirit of investigation, which is now manifesting itself, will never suffer this matter to rest, until such barbarity of sentiment is totally rescinded.

The hearer is cautioned against the supposition that the preacher takes the least satisfaction in giving those, who maintain the errors which he is endeavoring to expose, the smallest sensation that may disturb their comfort, and against harboring such a reprehensible disposition. But he may be assured, that no respect due to fellow mortals, can justly prevent us from bringing their *false notions* to the light.

The next subject, which we propose to notice is that of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. We have an account in the 16th of Numbers of the destruction of these persons, their families, and of all that appertained to them, by being swallowed up in the earth. This is another instance of divine providence, which those who believe and preach the doctrine of endless, unmerciful punishment advert to as a certain proof of its reality. But how can the account which we have of the destruction of those people prove what it says nothing of nor even implies? If one should say, that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram with their families went immediately, after they were swallowed up in the earth, to some one of the planets, where they have all lived ever since in a state of affluence, who could prove to the contrary? There is nothing in the account which we have of those people that intimate what became of them after they were swallowed up in the earth.

If we could be satisfied with the account which we have of this matter, there is no difficulty in understanding why these people were swallowed up, and the benefit thereby intended to the congregation.

As these men rose up to oppose Moses and Aaron, and to excite the people to rebellion, Moses told the congregation; "Hereby shall ye know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertaineth unto them, and they go down quickly into the pit, then ye shall understand that those men have provoked the Lord." According to these words the event took place, and the rebellion was ended.

The question is now put to the candor of this christian audience, what is there in this account that authorises the belief that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram are now in a state of endless torment? Moses did not intimate to the congregation that these people would be tormented after death; and in fact if he had told *them* so, they could not have been witnesses of the

truth of his testimony; nor could any other people since have known whether Moses spoke the truth or not. We have no account either sacred or profane, that gives any information of the situation of this company after the earth swallowed them up. If they have been in a state of torment ever since, that torment has been no terror to the living, because the living have known nothing of it. And it is certain, that those who advert to the case of Korah and his company, as an instance proving the doctrine of a future state of misery, do this thing on no higher authority than human tradition.

The destruction of the old world by the flood, is another event, on which, our preachers of punishment in a future state, depend for proof of their terrific doctrine. And such is the habit of thinking, with pious and religious people, on this subject, that whenever they think of the drowning of the inhabitants of the old world, their minds are carried directly to the idea of the awful state of suffering which those people have been in ever since. They never presume to call the matter in question. They never think of asking whether there be any proof of this horrible notion. They take it altogether on tradition, without taking the trouble ever to read the account to see what is said respecting it. Yet it is worthy of notice, that these very people, thus led away with superstition, will wonder, and even laugh at the absurd superstitions of other people, in matters of no consequence in comparison with this which we have now called in question. For instance, what a world of contention there has been between Roman Catholics and Protestants, on the question respecting transubstantiation, and what is termed the real presence. Protestants will even ridicule the superstition of their opponents on this subject; but after all, have they a thousandth part of the evidence to prove that the inhabitants of the old world are in a state of endless misery, as the Catholics have to prove the real presence? No, surely they have not. When Jesus took bread and brake it, *he said; "This is* my body." Protestants say, that

Jesus spake figuratively; but the Catholics deny this, and say, he meant as he said. Now what we ask is this, is there in all the account which we have of the destruction of the old world, any thing so much in favor of the misery of the people after death, as the words of Christ are in favor of the catholic sentiment? The fact is, there is nothing said on the subject. There is no intimation that the inhabitants who were drowned by the flood were made miserable at all in a future state. Thus Protestants, as well as the old Pharisees, "strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."

In the last place, we will notice the case of Judas, who betrayed Jesus. Because Jesus said; "It had been good for that man if he had not been born," it is now contended that Judas is in a state of misery from which there is no deliverance. But did the divine teacher say any thing on the subject of the state of existence that Judas would be in after this life? No, he surely did not. How then can his words prove what they say nothing of?

Let us ask the following question; Is it possible to prove that Judas now has any existence, from the words of Jesus, which we have quoted? "It had been good for that man if he had not been born." Do these words prove that Judas is now in existence? Surely no one will even pretend this. But it is beyond all scruple, that a sentence which does not prove that a man exists at a given time, cannot prove that he is miserable or happy at the same given time.

But it is said, if Judas exists, and if he should be made happy in the eternal world, the words of Jesus are not true, because the existence of Judas will be a blessing. This we pronounce loose and fallacious reasoning, such as is never used to prove any thing, except the doctrine of a future or endless misery. In all matters appertaining to men's interest, in this life, better proof is required than what is here relied on, to prove a state of endless torment. We even venture to say, that there could not be found a jury of twelve *men* who would award property to the amount of ten *dollars* to a man, who could not prove his claim to it

by evidence more to his case. We may suppose that Jesus meant, that it would have been good for Judas, if his lot had been appointed with those who never saw the light; or we may suppose that he meant, it would have been good for Judas if he had not been born until after that period of time; or we may suppose that Jesus meant, it would have been good for Judas if he had not at that time been born of the spirit of truth; for Peter says of those that fall away, "It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered unto them." Either of these suppositions is within the possible meaning of the words of Jesus; but the supposition that Jesus meant, that it would have been good for Judas not to have had an existence, is not within the possible meaning of his words; for if he had not existed, he could have received no good in any way. Whoever will carefully read what Job says concerning his being born, in his 3d chapter, and likewise what Jeremiah says of his own birth in his 20th chapter, will surely find as much proof of the misery of these men in another world, as they can find in the words of Jesus respecting the misery of Judas in the future state.

According to the words of Jesus in the 19th of Matthew, Judas had followed him in the regeneration. And we learn by the account we have in the 10th chapter, that Judas, as well as the rest of the twelve Apostles, was endowed with power to heal the sick, to cleanse lepers, to raise the dead, and to cast out devils; he was also commissioned to preach the gospel. In the labors of this miraculous ministry, we have no account that Judas was not as faithful and as successful as the rest of the twelve. But he was a fallible man like the rest; satan entered into him, and he committed one act that was base in the extreme; he betrayed his Master. Peter also denied him, and confirmed his denial with oaths. Judas was called a devil, and Peter was called satan. Our tradition has

placed Judas in hell, in the eternal world, and Peter in heaven.

The exclamation that Judas made when he repented and brought back the money (O that all, who profess to repent, would do likewise,) to the chief priests is worthy of observation: "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."—This shows the high estimation in which this unhappy man held innocence. It seems that the pain of his heart was occasioned by his having betrayed the innocent.

Now if he had had no love nor regard for innocence, but if entire opposition to all good had possessed his heart, he surely would not have repented and brought back the money; he would not have exclaimed, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."

My friends, the scriptures give no account that this man was miserable in another state; but the distress his soul was in, in consequence of having betrayed the innocent Jesus, should be a solemn warning to every one of us, that we never violate our duty to the innocent.

To conclude: God took away the Sodomites, Pharaoh and his host, Korah and his company, the inhabitants of the old world, Judas who betrayed his Master, and many others, as he saw good. His designs are all the designs of goodness. And if the Holy Ghost had intended to inform us that all those people were miserable in the invisible world, we should have found it so recorded in the faithful testimony. But we have reason to be thankful, and to praise the name of him, who gave himself a ransom for all, who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. We have great consolation in believing, that, "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." In opposition to the doctrine of future, endless misery, we present the unchangeable goodness of that God, who "is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works."

LECTURE XXI.

VEXATION OF FALSE RELIGION.

ISAIAH xxviii. last of 19.

"And it shall be a vexation only to understand the report."

THE prophet, in this chapter, contemplates the house of Israel in a state of great seeming security, into which they had introduced themselves, by making a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell, and by preparing for themselves a refuge of lies.

As is perfectly natural with those, who, by their own wisdom, frame for themselves partial systems, this people exulted in their confidence, and raised their expectations of seeing the destructions and calamities, from which they fancied themselves secure, fall like an overflowing scourge on those who had neglected to enter into their covenant, to avail themselves of their agreement, and to take shelter in their refuge.

According to their confidence and expectation they said; "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves."

Thus an overflowing scourge was expected; but it was to come on others, they were safe. They had made due preparations for security, and had nothing to anticipate but their own safety and the destruction of others, who had neglected to get an interest in their means of defence.

But the wisdom of man is foolishness with God. When he thinks himself secure, and is looking out for the destruction of others, he is frequently subjected to

the vexation of seeing his confidence fail, his hope expire, and his expectations die.

Such was the lot of that people whom the prophet addressed in this chapter. For in reply to their boasting, the Lord says; "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone; a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." This was widely different from their expectations. All their calculations failed. Their covenant with death disannulled; their agreement with hell dissolved; and the waters overflowed the hiding-places composed of lies. The bed prepared for repose is found to be too short; and the covering designed for defence from the cold, is too narrow. Thus their labor is lost: and in room of security they find trouble, and in room of beholding the destruction of others, they are vexed with the report of their own.

That the spirit of prophecy spake in this chapter concerning Christ and the gospel day seems evident from the 16th verse, which has been quoted.

"Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone; a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." Compare this with the following words of St. Peter; "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Also Acts iv. 11. "This is the stone

which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Likewise Psalm cxviii. 22, 23. "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes;" compared with Matt. xxi. 42. "Jesus saith unto them, did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?" To this stone St. Paul alludes in Romans ix. where he speaks of the stumbling of the house of Israel, as follows; "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at the stumbling stone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

By the light shed on our subject, by this comparison of scripture testimony, we are assisted to make the following conclusions.

I. The doctrine and religion of the old Jewish church, were represented by the prophet, as a covenant with death, an agreement with hell, and a refuge of lies.

II. The Messiah, his doctrine and religion, are represented by a precious corner stone, judgment laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and to hail and to waters forming an overflowing scourge, by which the covenant with death is disannulled, the agreement with hell destroyed, and the refuge of lies overflown. And

III. The vexation which the report of the doctrine, religion, and things of Jesus would cause his enemies, in the day of the manifestation of his power and grace.

The doctrine and religion of the old Pharisees, the most religious sect among the Jews, being the natural fruits of their carnal evil hearts, were very justly represented by a covenant and an agreement with death and hell. St. Paul says, "To be carnally minded is

death." And Jesus, speaking to the Pharisees, said; "O generation of vipers! how long can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man, out of the good treasures of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things."

There never was but two sorts of religion in the world, the true and the false. True religion is the natural growth of a good heart; and false religion is the spontaneous production of an evil heart. There never was but two doctrines in the world, the true and the false. The true doctrine is the offspring of the wisdom which is from above; and the false is the vain imagination of the wisdom which is from beneath. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy;" but the wisdom which is from beneath is directly the reverse; it is impure, contentious, unkind, inexorable, unmerciful, full of evil fruits, partial, and hypocritical.

This last was the doctrine of the Pharisees. It was that leaven which had, in a great degree, leavened the whole Jewish nation. It rendered the Pharisees and the people in general so inimical to Christ and his gospel.

This doctrine, which is represented by a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell, may always be known by its enmity. Put it into whatever dress you may, call it by whatever name you please, represent it as the most precious of all treasures, all this does not alter its nature. Call it, if you will, the apostolic faith, the holy catholic, the evangelic, the Calvinistic, the Arminian, or the orthodox; if there be partiality, if there be an unmerciful spirit, and if there be an implacable wrath in it, it is a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell. This doctrine may be taught by a renowned Gamaliel, it may have and command the influence of colleges and eminent professors, it may be decorated with gowns and bands, but it remains the same.

Lies and hypocrisy are its refuge. In his faithfulness to his adversaries, our Saviour did not fail to point out their hypocrisy, and the methods by which they deceived the people. He said; "Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widow's houses, and for a pretence make long prayer." All such prayers were falsehoods; they were mere pretences, designed to deceive the people. For this species of hypocrisy, Jesus told them, that they should receive the greater damnation.

Again, the Saviour said; "Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and, when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." This must have been done by falsehood and deceit.

"Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess." This again is all deceit. "Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." All this was designed to point out their hypocrisy, in appearing to be righteous when they were full of iniquity.

"Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." All this again was hypocrisy, which proved them to be the children of those who killed the prophets. The Saviour further said to his enemies; "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

Speaking to his disciples concerning the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus said; "All their works do they to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the

uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."

When these hypocrites gave any thing to the poor, they would sound a trumpet before them in the Synagogues, and in the streets, that they might have glory of men. When they fasted they were careful to disfigure their faces and to appear with sad countenances, that they might appear unto men to fast. These solemn, but false indications formed the refuge of lies which suitably become the partial doctrine and illiberal religion which they professed and practiced, and which the prophet represented by a covenant with death and an agreement with hell.

We have already said that there never was but one false religion, that there never was but one false doctrine; this false doctrine and spurious religion have always in all ages, do now, and will as long as they exist in the world manifest themselves by *we righteous, and they wicked.*

When the advocates of partial religion talk of the wicked, they always speak in the third person. "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." He is *gone* to be guest with a man that is a sinner. This is the native language of false religion. It is never heard to say, he is *come* to me a sinner, he receiveth me a sinner. It never says, "this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

When we say that there is but one false doctrine, we mean that all the doctrines invented by the wisdom of this world are one in spirit; they are partial, they are full of enmity, they have treasures of unmerciful wrath in them; in one word, you will always find that a false doctrine is unmerciful to sinners, but abundantly compassionate to the righteous. All the errors in the world are but one in this.

Those, who look on themselves as righteous, and view others as sinners, calculate largely on their own *safety*, on the rich rewards which they are to receive;

but are full of expectations and horror on account of the vengeance that is coming on the wicked. This is the case with the Pharisee in all countries, and has been in all ages. The old Pharisees of Jerusalem, those of the christian church of every denomination are one character, of one doctrine, of one spirit, they all speak one language. They look out for an overflowing scourge to fall on the wicked, but they are secure.

To such people the mild, merciful doctrine of Jesus is an overflowing scourge; to such doctrine, that gospel which is as the rain, which distils as the dew, is as a storm of hail which beats the tender herb to the ground.

To hear the news, to understand the report that grace, mercy, and peace are flowing to sinners through a kind Redeemer is indeed a vexation.

Let us, my hearers, notice some of the instances of vexation occasioned by the goodness and mercy of the Saviour, which are recorded in the New Testament.

But first let us observe how exactly the Pharisees were prepared to meet with disappointment and vexation. They expected a Messiah, and were looking out for him. They had no doubt but he would be one of their order, and would come to them as to the only righteous people on earth. They expected to receive his full approbation, and to hear all the anathemas which they had been in the habit of pronouncing on sinners, who had neglected to conform to their religion, reiterated by their Messiah accompanied with executive wrath.

Under these circumstances, and with such expectations, the chief priests, scribes, doctors of the law and Pharisees, at Jerusalem, hear a report which is circulated about the city, of one Jesus, away in the extreme part of the country, in Galilee of the Gentiles, who has undertaken to preach. In such a case it would be natural for them to inquire, who he was, and what sort of a man, and how he came inducted into the ministry. They soon learn that he is the son of a car-

penter, and that he was baptized by that John, who, being possessed of the devil, had the audacity to call them, as holy as they were, a generation of vipers. This information gives them disgust.

Another report comes which states what this new preacher has insinuated respecting the scribes and Pharisees; this report says, that the preacher has the impiety to tell his hearers; "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." This is looked upon as most profane, yea abominable. There comes another report, and the news flies about like lightning, that this new preacher pretends to be the Messiah promised, and that he works miracles in confirmation of his divine mission? This is vexation indeed.

My friends, can you conceive of any thing that could have been a greater vexation to a religious people, to a people, who really believed that they were heaven's favorites; and were conscious to themselves that they had served God in a most perfect manner, than to be told by one, who could heal the sick with a word, cast out demons by a command, open the eyes of the blind, and call the dead to life, that publicans and harlots should go into the kingdom of heaven before them? If the man who made this declaration, had been an ordinary character, or if he had been a person of no note among the people, it might not have occasioned them any trouble; they might have suffered it to pass like the unstable wind, which might the next hour blow the other way. But what must have been their astonishment, vexation, and confusion on hearing this report from the lips of Jesus, whose fame had already extended through all the country, whose wonderful miracles had already set the people all in motion, after whom thousands and thousands were flocking, carrying their sick, their lame, their blind and dumb, and who rejoiced in the manifestations of the divine power in healing all infirmities among the people?

"Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God *before* you." What a vexation! The chief priests

and elders of the people, who were in expectation of the Messiah, and who had made every preparation for his reception, which they thought necessary, were now informed that publicans and harlots were to go into the kingdom of God before them.

Never were people more vexed than were the pharisees in the affair of the man who was born blind. In the first place they would not believe that he was born blind; but after they had called his parents, and were certified that this was the case, they then asked him how he had received his sight. He assured them that Jesus had opened his eyes. They finally concluded that even if he did open his eyes, yet he was a sinner because he had done it on the sabbath day. But others said; "how can a man that is a sinner do such miracles, and there was a division among them."

Such was the vexation occasioned by this astonishing miracle, and by the testimony of him on whom it was performed, that they cast him out of the Synagogue.

The raising of Lazarus, and the report of this fact caused great vexation among the pharisees, who on this account, together with the chief priests, gathered a council, and said, what do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him." And they took counsel to put him to death. Nor did they think that this would be sufficient to prevent the evil; they thought it expedient also to put Lazarus to death, because many of the Jews believed on Jesus on account of going to see Lazarus, and being made acquainted with the fact of his having been dead, but raised up by the power of Jesus.

This divine teacher gave his enemies unspeakable vexation by charging them with hypocrisy to their faces, by calling them serpents, and a generation of vipers, and pronouncing on them woes and the damnation of hell.

But nothing caused greater vexation to the self-righteous, than the language of Jesus to sinners. "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee;

daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." For this they charged him with blasphemy.

This forgiveness of sins, placed the sinner on the same footing with the righteous, which was a vexation to those who had been at an incalculable expense and trouble to become righteous.

The parable of the laborers was designed to set forth the impartial goodness of God, and the vexation that the self-righteous would feel on hearing the report. All the day long did the laborers who were first hired, make their calculations how much better they were to fare at evening, than those who were idle in the markets. And when they saw them come into the vineyard at the eleventh hour, they were persuaded that they would receive little, or nothing for what they did; but when they saw them paid off, and knew that they received every man a penny, they were in hopes of receiving more, but what was their vexation when they received their penny also?

They murmured, they complained, they accused the good man of the house of unjust conduct; but he told them that he would give unto the last even as unto them.

The parable of the prodigal and the elder brother is another representation of the vexation which the doctrine of divine grace caused in the minds of the pharisees. When the elder brother was coming from the field at evening, he heard music and dancing in the house and great merriment and rejoicing. He sent a servant to know the occasion, who returned and informed him that his brother had come home, and that his father had killed the fatted calf, because he had received him safe and sound.

O the vexation that this report occasioned! He now looked back on the tedious labors which he for a long time, "lo many years," had faithfully performed in the service of his father, without even a kid to make merry with his friends. All this he compared with the ease, and pleasure in which his prodigal brother had passed *his* time, and wasted his father's property, and the expensive entertainment and sumptuous feasting with

which his father had welcomed him on his return. Such was the vexation of this toil-worn laborer, on hearing this report, that "he was angry and would not go in." No, he would not go into his own house, he would not refresh himself on his own provisions, he would not return to his own rest. His father came out and entreated him, but to no effect, of which we are informed.

My friends, what was the matter which caused this anger and vexation? It was simply this, the father's compassion, his mercy and grace to the sinner, was like an overflowing scourge, was like a storm of hail to the malevolent, unmerciful sentiments of this self-righteous bigot, who felt as if he could have rejoiced to see his brother excluded from all mercy.

It seems next to impossible, that any should not understand this case, and see the difference between the doctrine of the self-righteous, and that doctrine of divine grace, which gave such offence to the enemies of Jesus.

Such was their offence, such their vexation, that they finally procured the death of the Lord of glory. But by this means they were preparing for still greater vexation.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His purpose to perform."

After they had crucified the merciful Jesus, they made careful exertions to prevent his disciples imposing on the people a report of his resurrection. A stone was set at the mouth of the sepulchre, and a guard of soldiers to watch.

How hush, how still is the world! Every thing is now secure. No multitudes now flocking in crowds to hear the preaching of Jesus, no poor blind one groping after him who could give sight to the blind, none rushing along the streets with their sick, lame, and possessed of devils, to find him who controled all maladies; no little children in the streets, crying hosannah to the son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. *Where* are the disciples of the crucified

Jesus? They have fled, like timorous lambs from prowling wolves. None dare show themselves. The powers of darkness seem to triumph.

The scene changes, all Jerusalem is in astonishment. The disciples are publicly preaching the resurrection of Jesus; are endowed with the holy ghost and the gift of tongues, so that men of all nations hear them speak in their own language, the wonderful works of God.

The report of these things must have vexed the chief priests, the elders, the scribes and the pharisees beyond all description. They now saw all their efforts fail, and their hopes blasted. The apostles accused them of having murdered Jesus, whom God had anointed; they performed most astonishing miracles in confirmation of their testimony. When Peter and John restored the lame man in the temple before all the people, and declared that this miracle was wrought through faith in the name of Jesus, whom God had raised from the dead, these enemies of the gospel were "grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead."

After this manner the word of God prospered, the gospel spread; and though it was the rain of righteousness and the gentle dew of peace divine to those who had professed no religion, had formed no covenant with death, nor agreement with hell, yet to the pharisees, to the scribes, to the chief priests, and to the elders it was an overflowing scourge, it was as a storm of hail that beats the tender herb to the earth.

The report of the conversion of Saul, of his renouncing their superstitions, deserting the cause of persecuting the name of Jesus, and his preaching the gospel to the gentiles, was calculated to give them much perplexity and great vexation?

Thus far, dear friends, we have noticed things which took place in ancient times; let us now inquire if any thing similar is known in our day? Yes, we have those who profess the name of Jesus, say unto him, Lord, Lord, and yet are of the sentiments and description of the old Pharisees. They have made a covenant

with death and an agreement with hell. Death and hell compose their religion. Do they not hide themselves in a refuge of lies? Do they not for a pretence make long prayer? but devour widows houses? Do they not appear like whited sepulchres outward, and yet within are they not full of extortion? Do they not lie with their countenances, by disfiguring their faces? Did you never see professors of religion wear a very different face at one time than at another? Yes, you reply, but you thought it was because they were a most godly people. Then you have given them their reward, for this opinion of yours is all that they disfigured their faces for.

These modern pharisees are the most zealous people in religion, they look upon themselves as the favorites of heaven, but those who do not subscribe to their agreements and covenants, and take shelter in their refuge of deceit, they esteem as objects of the divine wrath which is ready to burst upon them, and lingers to blast them in everlasting woe.

To these enemies of the meek, humble, kind and merciful doctrine and religion of Jesus, the report, which God is sending forth at this eventful period, of his impartial grace, and his tender mercies which are over all his works, is a most grievous vexation.

When the divine testimony is brought to them, which certifies that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," that Jesus "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," that "as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life," that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," in power, in glory, in honor, in incorruption and immortality, this faithful report is a vexation.

Stung with resentment, they exclaim, heresy, delusion, a dangerous doctrine, a doctrine pleasing to the carnal mind, and which tends to all manner of vice.

They complain that this doctrine holds out no reward for righteousness; if God has mercy on the sinner, then there is no encouragement to serve him; if sinners are not to be punished eternally, it is no matter what they do. So murmured the laborers who bore the burthen and the heat of the day, at the good man who humbled their pride by making the last equal with them.

Their eye was evil because goodness had extended beyond the narrow limits of their creed. They had lotted on the gratification which they expected in seeing those, who spent so much of their time in idleness, destitute and pennyless. Similar calculations are now made, and pretended saints are exulting in the expectation of the joys which they are to inherit in heaven in seeing sinners in endless perdition.

So complained the elder brother, because his father kindly received the prodigal, and killed for his entertainment the fatted calf. Such was his resentment that he would not go into the house. Similar resentment is now manifested, and the proud boasting Pharisee is heard to say "If sinners are going to heaven, I wish not to bear them company."

O that these deceived souls could be introduced to, and form an acquaintance with so great strangers as they are to themselves.

Then should we hear from them a different language. Then would they say, if there be mercy for sinners, then is there a ray of hope for us. If Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, then are we the objects of his unmerited favor.

My christian friends, you are most humbly and affectionately entreated not to construe the faithfulness of this discourse, to signify that the speaker harbors one unfriendly feeling towards any denomination or name in the world. The sole object is to set truth before you, to show the difference between true and false religion, to endear the character, the doctrine, and spirit of Jesus to your hearts; and to give you occasion to trust and to rejoice in his grace.

"Let Pharisees of high esteem,
Their faith and zeal declare;
All their religion is a dream,
If love be wanting there."

God is love, and love worketh no ill. Through all worlds, and to all beings, God is love. With him there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. What he has been, and what he is now, is what he will forever remain.

Let us, my dear friends, imitate our Father in heaven; let us love our neighbors as ourselves, let us love our enemies and pray for them.

LECTURE XXII.

GOD'S UNCHANGEABLE LOVE TO SINNERS THE CAUSE OF CHRIST'S MISSION.

ROMANS, v. 8.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

THE general subject, on which the Apostle labored, which led him to the statement made in our text, was to show that the justification of man unto spiritual life, depended on a covenant of promise, and not on a law of works. In the preceding chapter our author is remarkably explicit, where he says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." And speaking of the faith of Abraham, even before circumcision, he says, "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed: not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all." The faith of which the Apostle here speaks, is the same which he calls "the covenant of promise" in Ephesians ii. 12. It is an egregious mistake to suppose that Abraham's believing in the promise of God, is the "*right*eousness of faith," by which he was constituted *the heir* of the world; for Abraham could not believe *the promise* that he should be the heir of the world un-

til such promise was communicated to him, and this promise could not have been communicated to him, at an earlier date than the establishment of its own truth in the purpose of him who made the promise.

This covenant of promise is the FAITH, of which the Apostle again speaks in the beginning of this chapter as follows; "Therefore, being justified by FAITH, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." That this FAITH, by which we are justified, is not our act of believing, will appear evident by the connexion in which the Apostle here places it. That we may understand this subject clearly, we must disregard the division of these two chapters, and read the last verse of the fourth chapter and the first of the fifth together. Speaking of Jesus, the Apostle says, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we h ve peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Here it is evident that the inspired Apostle makes the resurrection of Christ, and the faith by which we are justified the same; by which it is evident, that by FAITH he no more meant the act of believing, than he meant that the resurrection of Jesus, for our justification, was the act of believing.

This FAITH, which is the covenant of promise, the Apostle distinguishes most clearly from the act of believing in chapter 3d, as follows; "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." No one will suppose that the faith of God is his act of believing, for the act of believing is a consequence resulting from the power of evidence in the mind, which power can never act in the mind of him who is omniscient. But this FAITH of God is his covenant of promise, made known to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law by Moses; concerning which covenant our author speaks to the Galatians as follows; "*And this I say*, that the covenant that was confirm-

ed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." This covenant of promise this author again calls faith in the 11th of Hebrews. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen." The substance of what we hope for is not our act of believing, but the thing in which we believe.

It was thought needful to be thus particular on this subject, for two reasons.

I. To expose the common error which supposes, that our act of believing is required as a condition of our justification before God. This error has so confused the minds of professors of Christianity, that they know not how to explain their own thoughts. They believe that God requires our act of believing as a condition of our justification; and it is constantly held up and urged that our everlasting destruction will be the just recompense of our unbelief. But if we ask what there is for us to believe, there is no answer. For if the thing to be believed were stated, the next question would be, shall the unbelief of man make the faith of God without effect? And,

II. Because it was in the fulfilling of his covenant of promise, that God commended his love to sinners by the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The particular mode by which the Apostle presented the testimony contained in our text was by drawing a comparison between the compassion or goodness of man, and the compassion or goodness of God. The following are his words; "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Here the comparison is clear and striking to the mind; and evidently shows that the design of the Apostle was to show that the love of God to sinners is vastly stronger than the love of man toward man.

The first particular which we shall consider as prov

ed by the testimony of our text is, that neither sin nor any thing else was ever the cause of enmity in God toward man.

Though this proposition is of immense consequence, it seems to have been overlooked by our divines, who have constantly represented the divine Being to be full of wrath and tremendous indignation against sinners. And yet the passage under consideration is a direct and plain testimony against all that has ever been said on this subject.

The hearer is requested to notice, with attention, the two propositions which are in direct opposition to each other, and which are the foundations of true and false doctrine. One proposition asserts that God loves sinners, and that nothing ever can cause him to do otherwise; and the other contends that God hates the sinner, and will eternally exercise unmerciful wrath on the transgressor. If one of these be true, the other must be false; they cannot both be true, nor can they both be false. But which is true?

As there is like to be some dispute on this subject, and as the hearer will wish to have it so conducted, as to make a clear distinction, both between the parties, and their respective arguments, we will give to the parties distinguishing names. The party, who contends that God loves the sinner, we will call LIGHT, and the one who contends for the contrary proposition we will call DARKNESS.

Do you ask why these names are chosen? Because light seems to be expressive of love, and darkness of hatred. And the beloved John says, "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light—But he that hateth his brother is in darkness."

Let us hear what darkness argues in support of his favorite proposition, viz. that God hates the sinner.

He says, as God is a Being of infinite holiness and purity he cannot love unholiness and impurity, but must, consistently with his own essential attributes, hate sin in an exact proportion to his love of righteousness; *and as the sinner* is not righteous, but sinful;

is not holy, but unholy; is not pure, but impure, God must of necessity hate the sinner.

Light replies; Though I grant your premises, yet I cannot concede to your conclusion. So far from allowing your conclusion to be a just deduction from your premises, I shall contend that it is in direct opposition to them, and if it could be maintained as a truth, it must be by disproving the argument from which you deduce it.

The amount of your argument is, that God is opposed to sin. This I grant. Now tell me, Darkness, what is sin?

Sin is the transgression of the law. What does the law require? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Rightly answered. Now, Darkness, do you not see that hatred is the transgression of, and the only sin that can be committed against this law? If it be sin for man to hate God, is it holiness for God to hate man? In room of hating sin, you contend that God hates the sinner, that is, he hates the man who hates him. Thus you deny your own premises. For there is no more holiness in God's hating man, than there is in man's hating God; there is no more righteousness in any supposed enmity in God toward man, than there is in man's enmity toward God.

Darkness says, that this argument is blasphemy, that it accuses God with unholiness and sin.

Light denies the charge, and says; It is you, Darkness, that accuses God with this unholy spirit of hatred. To illustrate the subject light uses the following metaphor.

The parent of a family of children gives to his offspring a law which requires them all to love him sincerely, and to love each other; but these children fall out by the way, get wrong notions respecting their parent's character and law, and are filled with hatred toward him, toward his law, and toward one another. In consequence of this the parent, in room of loving his children as he did when he first gave them this

law, now hates them and is full of enmity towards his disobedient offspring. What a sad scene is here! The children are enemies to their parent, and what is worse, the parent is an enemy to his children!

Let candor judge in this case, let enlightened reason decide the question, which is worst, for the child to hate the parent, or for the parent to hate the child? Though the light shineth in darkness, yet the darkness comprehendeth it not.

If the death of Christ for sinners was a commendation of the love of God toward us, it certainly proves, beyond all contradiction, that sin, nor any thing else had caused any hatred or enmity in God toward man.

The second thing which we shall consider as proved by the declaration of our text is, that the common opinion and doctrine of the church, which has represented the death of Christ as necessary in order to reconcile God to mankind is erroneous.

This error has been exposed and disproved in some of our former lectures, but as it is an error of such vast magnitude, involving such palpable absurdities, representing God as a changeable Being; and as it is so generally believed among various denominations, it seems proper to notice it in our discourse from the words under consideration, by which the error is so fully exploded.

The error under consideration supposes, that mankind in consequence of sin, was under the divine wrath of God, which required the endless misery of the transgressor: and that Jesus Christ suffered the wrath of God in room and stead of the sinner, by which God became reconciled and satisfied. The statement is made thus plain, that the hearer may have a distinct view of the subject, and be able to judge after hearing what may be offered on it.

That this testimony is by no means too high colored, may be seen by the following quotations from our hymns. But before we attend to the quotations, let it be observed, that we hold these hymns, in general, in high estimation, and the authors of them as bright and

shining lights in the christian constellation; but after all we are disposed to do ourselves justice by gathering the good into vessels, and by casting the bad away.

"Once we were fallen, O how low;
Just on the brink of endless wo.

Sinners to save from endless woes,
The wrath divine he sinks beneath.

Think, how his side was pierced for you,
T' appease the wrath divine.

He on Calvary's summit died:
God, your Father satisfied.

Sinner's to save from endless wo,
The Father's frown he sinks beneath

'T is finish'd—Heaven is reconcil'd.

The wrath of an offended God,
In sweet oblivion laid.

And sinners freed from endless pains,
Own him their Saviour and their head."

Here are endless woes, endless pains, Divine wrath, the Father's wrath, the wrath of an offended God, an unreconciled heaven, all which stood threatening mankind, but were poured forth on the devoted head of Jesus, by which we are saved from the wrath of God.

My brethren, such language as this certainly represents our Father in heaven, to be a changeable Being, and a Being capable of exercising the greatest possible enmity. It supposes that our merciful Father was so full of wrath, that he was just on the point of sending mankind to a state of endless wo, when Jesus stept between us and harm, snatched the thunderbolt from the uplifted hand of stern justice, and received its burning vengeance in his own innocent bosom, at which God was satisfied.

This is the theme our christian doctors have inculcated, and our christian poets have sung, but it is the blackness of darkness which has obscured the beauty of the Divine countenance for ages, and caused the mind to wander in the labyrinth of error.

This error is found in that creed, which lay on our [l]es in our infancy, and our dear mothers taught repeat with infant lips, and to say, "All mankind

by the fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse; and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever."

In opposition to this erroneous representation, let us place our text together with a few concurrent passages.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ."

These passages, which are but a specimen of the gospel, fully prove the following facts.

I. That God loved the sinful world of mankind with a great love.

II. That in consequence of this love he sent his Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins. And,

III. That in consequence of the love which God had toward those who were dead in sins, he quickened them together with Christ. Now just as plain as these obvious facts are proved by the testimony already recited, so evident it is that the death of Christ was never necessary to reconcile our heavenly Father to us; but was a manifestation of his unchangeable love toward us.

The third particular which you are invited to contemplate relative to our text is, that its subject belongs to that covenant of promise which was the Apostle's theme which led him to speak these words. That we may have a clear view of this, let us first examine the character of the promise made to Abraham, by which he was constituted the heir of the world and the Father of us all; and then bring our text to compare with the promise, that their union may be visible. The pro-

mise to Abraham reads thus, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." St. Paul's comment on this promise in his epistle to the Galatians is as follows, "And the scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed." By this passage we learn, that the blessing which God promised to all the nations of the earth was justification through faith; which faith we have proved to be the covenant of promise, or the faith of God which cannot be made void by the unbelief of man. Relative to this justification our Apostle says to the Romans; "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And again, in the chapter where our text is recorded, he says; "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

In the light of the divine promise to Abraham, which the passages here quoted present, we can see most clearly, that the gospel of eternal life was promised to all mankind, as the bountiful, unbought, unasked favor of our heavenly Father. And this favor, when stated in promise to Abraham, was, as it now remains, the necessary production of the divine, unchangeable love of God to mankind, which never was, nor can be made less by the sin of the world. Having this view of the goodness of God, we see the divine harmony of our text with the covenant of promise. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The same covenant love which was manifested to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law, by Moses, is now commended toward mankind, while yet in sin, by the death of him in whom all the families of the earth are blessed with justification. In relation to this divine subject Jesus said to the Jews; "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad."

The fourth particular subject belonging to our text, to which your attention is solicited, is embraced in the following question: Why did Christ die for us? We have already proved that there was no necessity of his dying in order to procure the favor of God toward sinners, for if that had been the case, his death could not have been a commendation of the divine love. And indeed, if there were any need of more proof on this subject, than has been presented, we should find all deficiencies supplied, by the prayer of Jesus when dying on the cross.

Let us, my friends, with profound solemnity, listen to these words, which contain more true divinity, more pure unadulterated gospel, than all the creeds which have been written since the world began. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Why did he not say; "Father, forgive them, for I have now suffered thy wrath which burned against them; I have drank the cup of thy fury which was prepared for them; I have borne that they may never bear thy righteous ire?" If all this had been true, why should he pray as he did, and request that God would forgive them? If the Father had exacted a full penalty for their sins, of his son, how could he after this be called on to forgive them? But the reason, the plea which the dying Saviour stated in his prayer, was, "For they know not what they do."

Our question remains. Why did Christ die for us? How are we benefitted by his death? Be patient, we still reply in the negative. Christ did not die for us, that we might avoid condemnation if we commit sin, nor did he suffer for us, that we might not be punished for faults if we commit them. This we know by our experience and by his word. We know by experience, if we sin we feel condemned, and this we must feel until the condemnation is removed by repentance. And we know by the words of Jesus, that, in place of his suffering in our room and stead, as our erroneous doctrines have taught us, he will render unto every man according to his works.

Why then did he die for us? The answer is in *our text. He died* to commend the love of God to-

ward us sinners. He died for us, that he might take away our sins. "Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He suffered for us, to set us an example, that we should follow his steps. He died for us, that he might bring life and immortality to light through his resurrection. He died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the dead and the living. He died and rose again, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled, and the ministry of reconciliation be established. He suffered and died to show us how sin and all moral evil are to be overcome, by rendering good for evil, love for hatred, kindness for unkindness, and mercy for wrath.

Four important particulars may be distinctly noticed which rendered the death and resurrection of Christ of vast utility to mankind.

1. To commend and make known the unchangeable love and mercy of God to a sinful world, thereby to bring sinners to repentance and to be reconciled to God.

II. To fulfil all that the prophets had written concerning him, that the authenticity of divine revelation and the doctrine of the gospel might be successfully communicated to the gentile nations.

III. That the patient sufferings which he endured for the benefit of his enemies and the whole world, might ever remain as an example for his disciples to imitate, in all faithfulness, patience, and resignation to the will of God. And,

IV. That he might bring life and immortality to light by his glorious resurrection; and manifest the truth of a future happy existence for mankind.

If the mind will be serious and candid, it will at once acknowledge that these four particulars, when viewed in their harmony and proper connexion, when considered in relation to the innumerable blessings which they have already produced, and promise to produce in future, are altogether worthy of the wisdom, power, and goodness of our heavenly Father.

But to pretend that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and die to appease the wrath of our merciful Father in heaven, is the most unaccountable perversion

of divine truth, of which the vain imagination of benighted humanity was ever capable.

The fifth particular subject to which our text seems to invite our most careful notice is, that the love and mercy of God toward sinners, commended to us by the death of Christ, is consistent with the unchangeable principle of moral righteousness.

It might be thought, that in order to establish this hypothesis, nothing more could be required as evidence than the text under consideration. For if we are certified that the divine being does in fact love sinners, that is sufficient evidence that it is morally right that he should do so; but our present object is to do more than barely to prove the fact, the object is to illustrate it to the understanding. To do this we will first admit our opposer's objection to be stated. The objection is this;

According to the strict rule of moral righteousness, every moral being must be treated according to his works; but if God does in reality love sinners, if he grants them the infinite blessings of his grace, it seems that he does not deal with them according to their deserts. Reply

It is granted that moral righteousness requires that every transgression and disobedience should receive a just recompense of reward, but then it must be granted, that as the right to inflict punishment is derived from the commission of crime, so it is limited by the offence committed, and it is an acknowledged fact that to extend punishment beyond the demerit of a crime, is, at least, as wide a departure from moral right as to come short. But the right to do good and to show kindness is not derived, nor is it limited.

In finite beings the power and means to do good and to show favor are limited, but the right is not limited. And in every instance in which our power and means are limited to grant all the favor that is needed, we have the liberty still to extend our benevolent wishes without limitation.

If one of our fellow creatures commits a crime which *is punishable by law*, it is true, we have no right to *prevent this* punishment, but we have an unlimited

ed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." This covenant of promise this author again calls faith in the 11th of Hebrews. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen." The substance of what we hope for is not our act of believing, but the thing in which we believe.

It was thought needful to be thus particular on this subject, for two reasons.

I. To expose the common error which supposes, that our act of believing is required as a condition of our justification before God. This error has so confused the minds of professors of Christianity, that they know not how to explain their own thoughts. They believe that God requires our act of believing as a condition of our justification; and it is constantly held up and urged that our everlasting destruction will be the just recompense of our unbelief. But if we ask what there is for us to believe, there is no answer. For if the thing to be believed were stated, the next question would be, shall the unbelief of man make the faith of God without effect? And,

II. Because it was in the fulfilling of his covenant of promise, that God commended his love to sinners by the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The particular mode by which the Apostle presented the testimony contained in our text was by drawing a comparison between the compassion or goodness of man, and the compassion or goodness of God. The following are his words; "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Here the comparison is clear and striking to the mind; and evidently shows that the design of the *Apostle* was to show that the love of God to sinners *is vastly* stronger than the love of man toward man.

The first particular which we shall consider as prov

love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." From this rich and glorious sentiment the Apostle draws the following conclusion. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Certainly there cannot be a more reasonable inference drawn from any proposition ever laid down than the one which the Apostle here draws from the love of God to mankind. If we had good reason to believe that our Father in heaven really hated his enemies or those who do not love him, if we were consistent with such a belief, we should hate all those whom we viewed of this description. And this has been the case in the christian church as well as through the world. Men have hated and persecuted one another on this mistaken notion; and verily thought they did God service by so doing. But if we are convinced that God loved us, while we were yet enemies to him by wicked works, and if we believe that he loves every sinner of the human family, and that he has manifested this love by the death of his holy child Jesus, it is all as clear as the sun in a cloudless day, that we ought to love our enemies, and to do them all the good that is in our power. And to do otherwise, my christian friends, is to deny our religion and our doctrine, and that in a more effectual manner than Peter denied his Lord.

To conclude. Our subject presents before our rejoicing eyes, a boundless scene of divine grace; it invites us to the sweetest field of contemplation, where goodness, unlimited goodness, mercy, unlimited and impartial mercy eternally flow as broad rivers and streams; as waters, risen waters for men to swim in, which no man can pass.

Let us close with the appropriate words of the poet:

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys;
Transported with the view, I 'm lost,
In wonder, love and praise."

is not holy, but unholy; is not pure, but impure, God must of necessity hate the sinner.

Light replies; Though I grant your premises, yet I cannot concede to your conclusion. So far from allowing your conclusion to be a just deduction from your premises, I shall contend that it is in direct opposition to them, and if it could be maintained as a truth, it must be by disproving the argument from which you deduce it.

The amount of your argument is, that God is opposed to sin. This I grant. Now tell me, Darkness, what is sin?

Sin is the transgression of the law. What does the law require? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Rightly answered. Now, Darkness, do you not see that hatred is the transgression of, and the only sin that can be committed against this law? If it be sin for man to hate God, is it holiness for God to hate man? In room of hating sin, you contend that God hates the sinner, that is, he hates the man who hates him. Thus you deny your own premises. For there is no more holiness in God's hating man, than there is in man's hating God; there is no more righteousness in any supposed enmity in God toward man, than there is in man's enmity toward God.

Darkness says, that this argument is blasphemy, that it accuses God with unholiness and sin.

Light denies the charge, and says; It is you, Darkness, that accuses God with this unholy spirit of hatred. To illustrate the subject light uses the following metaphor.

The parent of a family of children gives to his offspring a law which requires them all to love him sincerely, and to love each other; but these children fall out by the way, get wrong notions respecting their parent's character and law, and are filled with hatred toward him, toward his law, and toward one another. In consequence of this the parent, in room of loving his children as he did when he first gave them this

But in order to administer consolation to those who are exercised with adversity or sorrow, it is necessary that the cause should be understood and likewise the extent of grief. Unless the physician understands the cause of complaint, and the extent of disease, it would be mere chance if he did not give force to the former, and enhance the latter by his prescriptions. The case of the woman in the gospel is an instance of what we are now observing. Twelve years was she troubled with her disorder, "and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing the better, but rather grew worse." But when she came to Jesus she was made whole without suffering any thing of him, and without expense.

The cause of that kind of sorrow which the Apostle was desirous to prevent appears to be ignorance. Observe the text; "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

The particular subjects suggested by these words, and to which our future labors in the present discourse may be directed are the following.

I. Ignorance concerning those which are asleep, is the only cause of hopeless sorrow for them.

II. The knowledge of the truth concerning those which are asleep administers hope and comfort to those who mourn for their friends.

III. This knowledge is communicated in the gospel, through Jesus Christ.

There are two powers by which ignorance operates in the human mind, in a way to prevent happiness and to augment sorrow, even to despair. The first prevents our knowing the things which belong to our peace, and the second opens a door for an infinite variety of imaginations all calculated to administer affliction and to cause our sorrows to increase.

The mind that is destitute of knowledge and at the *same time devoted* to fearful imagination, is like one *disturbed by* a frightful dream.

Safely slumbering in the peaceful chamber of repose, and no danger nigh, one might dream of descending a declivity directly leading to a fatal precipice, view destruction as inevitable, and feel the pang of despair; and the whole difficulty end with the sudden interruption of the dream. In fact, though there were every possible reason for sweet content, supporting confidence, and joyful hope, ignorance of all these things would not only prevent these blessings, but expose the mind to a thousand imaginary anticipations which belong to the family of despair.

A few examples from the scriptures may serve further to illustrate this subject.

There were three particular events relative to the patriarch Jacob, his ignorance of which was the cause of the greatest anxiety, most fearful apprehensions, and hopeless sorrow. When he was informed that his brother Esau, whom he had supplanted, was coming to meet him with four hundred men, he feared the wrath of his injured brother, and his soul was greatly troubled for his wives and for his children. There was no way of escape by flight, his means to oppose his brother were nothing; he feared all was lost, and that the anger of his brother would blot out his name forever from under heaven. Now imagination presented before his almost distracted eyes the most shocking catastrophe to which mothers and their innocent children could possibly be exposed. His fearful heart melted within him, and he placed his devoted family in the order in which, if they must be destroyed, his choice would dictate, and in that arrangement which might possibly afford him an opportunity of saving such as were the most dear to his troubled heart. But how suddenly were his fears all dispelled when Esau ran to him, embraced him with fraternal affection and tenderness, and kindly received and compassionately treated every branch of his family.

What an expense of feelings, the most tormenting would have been saved in this case, if the love and forgiveness, which most bountifully flowed in the heart

of Esau toward his brother, had been known to him, whose ignorance of the truth had deprived him of peace, and had let a thousand frightful apprehensions into his mind, which had no foundation in fact.

It might be about ten years after this, that the sons of Jacob brought to their father the coat of many colors, which his beloved Joseph wore from home, when he went to seek after the welfare of his brethren. This coat they now presented to their father, torn in pieces and covered with blood. "He knew it, and said, it is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is, without doubt, rent in pieces. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days." Yea he refused all comfort and said; "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning."

Who can describe the sorrow which preyed on the heart of the afflicted father? Methinks I see him seated alone beneath some favorite, salutary shade, giving vent to his grief and indulgence to his tears. He seems to ask; was it the lion's paw that struck the tender lad to the ground, or was it the hungry jaw of the merciless tiger that dislocated his youthful limbs, or was it the voracious leopard that deprived me of the desire of my eyes? O cruel ignorance! what distracting imaginations! Could Jacob but have known that his Joseph was safe in the hands of the Angel of God who protected him, hope would have brightened his countenance, soothed his affliction, and administered peace and joy to his heart.

In the days of the famine, when the sons of Israel were to go down to Egypt the second time, and when they demanded Benjamin to go with them, how trying was all this to the heart of the father of the twelve tribes. How full of grief are his words. "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me." Such were the hopeless sorrows of one who was ignorant concerning the subjects of his sorrow. At the very moment when this dark and gloomy aspect lay before his eyes, Joseph was lord of all Egypt, the owner of the vast

graineries in that land of plenty, and Simeon was safe in the hands of his compassionate brother; and both were waiting with fervent desire to see Benjamin. Had the venerable Patriarch known at this time the truth, his heart would have leaped for joy, as it afterwards did when his children returned and told him that Joseph was alive.

In the several cases which we have noticed, it is evident that the ignorance of Jacob was that which not only prevented the joyful expectations of hope, but introduced the most tormenting imaginations.

Now the sentiment of our text supposes that this is the case with those, who being ignorant concerning them that are asleep, sorrow for them without hope.

There are two opinions concerning those who are fallen asleep in death, and but two, which are calculated to exercise the mourner with hopeless sorrow.

The least pernicious, is the opinion that there is no future existence for mankind. When a person of this opinion loses by death any near and beloved connexion there are two grounds of sorrow. The first is the loss, the eternal loss of such a desirable connexion, and the other is the everlasting extinction of this intellectual moral being. And it is impossible that either of these reflections should be accompanied with the least ray of hope. Is it a father or a mother, a wife or a child, a brother or a sister, of which the mourner is bereaved? And was this connexion most dearly and tenderly beloved? What a gloomy thought, to believe that death has blotted out of existence one so tenderly and affectionately beloved, must present an impenetrable cloud of darkness to the mind, that forbids its making the least advance, repels, and drives it back on its perishable self, and yawns to receive the hopeless mourner to the abyss of nonentity.

Enough, you say, dwell not a moment on such horror. But what shall we say? the other opinion, which denies the consolation of hope to the mourner is, that our future existence is worse, far worse than no existence at all. Such are the dismal horrors of everlasting misery in the coming, eternal state, which the tra

ditions of the church have handed down from generation to generation, as have rendered the thoughts of eternity, thoughts of horror.

Is it replied, that our traditions admit that some few of the human family will be happy hereafter, and therefore when our friends die, we may entertain a hope that they belong to this little favorite number?

We reply; an absurdity is no just ground of hope. If but a few of the human family are appointed unto salvation, it is absurd for all to hope that they belong to that little number. It is a circumstance that affords matter of much contemplation; and one from which human weakness and human selfishness may be learned, that go where you will, among whatever denomination of people, even among those who hold the most illiberal sentiments, and believe that not more than one out of a thousand will be happy hereafter, yet if they lose any of their friends by death, they hope they are gone to rest. There are in this metropolis, no doubt, a very respectable number of pious people, who believe without a doubt, that when the Saviour said; "many are called, but few are chosen," he meant that but a few of the whole family of mankind are elected unto everlasting life in the eternal world; and yet when these people are visited with bereaving providences, and any of their connexions are taken away by death, they hope it is well with them hereafter. You cannot find one, in any possible case who will say to the contrary. Fathers, mothers, wives, children, brothers, sisters, near friends, intimate acquaintances, none of them will admit the doctrine of everlasting misery, in which they believe, to apply to each other, nor to themselves. And yet, according to their creed, they have not the least ground for the hopes which they entertain.

If you ask these people what reason they have for the least comfort, they will say; we do not know whom God has reprobated, and therefore we do not know that our friends or ourselves are appointed unto wrath. Thus their ignorance concerning them that are asleep, in most of instances, according to their

creed, is the sole reason why they are not distracted with gloomy and black despair.

Were this creed of limited salvation, and the doctrine of the endless misery of a great part of mankind the truth of the divine economy, and could the vail of ignorance concerning them that are gone from this mortal state be removed, what language could possibly describe the horrors and the lamentations which would be the unhappy consequence of such a manifestation?

We have heard the heart-rending moans and melting sighs of those, whose dear connexions were toiling under the burden and lash of slavery. Their interjections would seemingly move the stones to pity. What to these people is the sumptuous fare of the board of plenty? or what to them is the bed of down? or what to them are the thousands they possess? All would they give could the father, child or brother, as the case might be, return to freedom and home. But compared with the dire scenes of eternal misery under consideration, all this is no more than the weight of a pebble to that of the ponderous globe.

Do you believe this doctrine? O tell it not to the mourner. If you do not, and cannot believe it for yourselves; if you can believe it only for others, why tell it to them? Can they bear to believe it for themselves and for their friends, any more than you can endure to believe it for yourselves and for those whom you love?

It is worthy of notice, that as the creed under consideration requires people in general to be ignorant concerning them that are asleep, in order for them to have any hope in the days of their mourning, it is exactly the reverse of the sentiment of our text, which supposes that to be ignorant concerning them who are asleep, exposes us to sorrow without hope; and on the contrary that the true knowledge concerning the condition of such would be a source of divine consolation.

Let us direct our attention in the next place to ascertain that knowledge concerning those who have fall-

en asleep in death, which the faithful word of divine inspiration affords.

But before we proceed to notice any particular passages, it is of importance that we begin this inquiry under the influence of proper motives; and it is likewise necessary that in the pursuit of our object, we should reason with due reference to the criterion furnished by our text. The motives which ought to induce us to this investigation should be free from the influence of any particular creed, from embarrassments arising from prepossessions for, or against any party opinions, and should be entirely devoted to the attainment of the truth, the promotion of the honor of God, and the advancement of our own rational and intellectual happiness. And if we pursue this inquiry with due reference to the criterion furnished by our text, we shall admit nothing as true which is calculated to destroy our hope concerning those who are asleep.

The words of Solomon recorded in Ecclesiastes seem to be direct to our present subject, "So I turned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive."

The three following ideas are evidently suggested by the passage recited:

I. In relation to all the oppressions done under the sun, and in relation to all the oppressed, and all the oppressors, they were both equally destitute of comfort.

II. The condition of those who are dead is better than the condition of those who are yet alive. And,

III. There is no just occasion for our mourning because our friends are dead.

It may be proper to observe here that we do not mean that we have no just cause of mourning when our friends are taken from us, in one certain sense. We have reason to sorrow for the loss of their sweet and

agreeable company on our pilgrimage of mortal life, but on their account, we have no just cause to mourn that they are dead. It is with regret, that we dismiss our children from the happy domestic circle, where parental love and filial affections have been the blessing of both parents and children, when we have no reason to doubt that their departure is necessary for their future happiness in life, and the tear of sensibility marks the adieu which sanctions the separation. The house they leave seems lonesome to those who are left behind, and yet as long as it is believed by parents that it is best for their children to be away, they will not indulge a disposition to wish them back.

The Apostle in our text, does not forbid, nor dissuade his brethren from sorrow for the loss of their friends. But his reasoning was to prevent their sorrowing without hope. And it is certain that if we have the same opinion concerning the dead, that Solomon expressed in the passage just recited, though we may feel to mourn that we are are destitute of the society of those we tenderly love, yet there is a consolation in believing that they are better off than the living.

This author, speaking in another passage of the dissolution of the body, says; "Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern: then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

What can give more rational consolation to those who mourn, than to realize that the spirits of their departed connexions are with God? or what thought can possibly contribute more to tranquilize our minds, and prepare us to meet our own dissolution, than a confident belief that we shall be with God? To be in the hands of a God of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness; to be disposed of according to his will, *which* is boundless goodness and mercy, is all that a *reasonable* creature can possibly desire; and of this we *may* be safely persuaded.

When the Sadducees questioned our Saviour concerning the resurrection of the dead, he said to them; "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now, that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him."

By the authority of Jesus we are here certified, that all that die live unto God in the resurrection, and are the children of God, equal to angels, and can die no more.

When we consider that he who thus testified was sent of God to "bear witness unto the truth," that the "spirit of the Lord God" was upon him, that the Lord anointed him to bind up the broken hearted, and to comfort all that mourn, shall we hesitate to believe his testimony? There certainly is no subject concerning which the divine teacher has left us his testimony which is of greater moment than this. The doctrine of the resurrection, which was the subject of debate between him and the Sadducees, lies at the foundation of the religion of Jesus, and we have every reason to believe that he was explicit when he refuted and silenced his adversaries on a question of such importance. We may further remark, that there is not the least intimation that the divine teacher spake figuratively or parabolically in this reply to the Sadducees; but every circumstance relative to the subject which we have on record, goes to show that his words are to be understood in the most plain and obvious sense.

We may now notice some passages from the writings of the author of our text concerning them that are asleep, which correspond perfectly with the words of the divine teacher.

To the Romans he says; "For he that is dead is

freed from sin." This information concerning those that are asleep seems extremely necessary in order to administer consolation to mourners. If we may make further use of the simile of our children's going from us, we may observe, that could we always know that they would fall into no vicious or irreligious habits, it would be a source of much comfort. Of this we are certified concerning those who have gone from this earthly corruptible state; they are freed from sin. The temptations of the flesh will no more allure, inordinate appetites no more entice, unholy desires are extinct, and the spirit is with God who gave it.

To the Corinthians this author says; "For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In this mortal state, if our dwellings are superb and every way convenient, we know that we shall enjoy them but a little time; but concerning them that are asleep, they have an house eternal in the heavens. Our earthly house of this tabernacle, let it be ever so beautiful, must soon crumble to dust, and all the loveliness of mortal flesh is but a flower for the tomb. Look we on our sons and daughters, and pride ourselves in their strength and beauty? All is but a blossom exposed to the blast of the east wind. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." But heavenly and eternal things are permanent.

On the subject of a future state, and of the immortality of that constitution, St. Paul has said more in the 15th chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians than is recorded by any other writer in the scriptures. His first argument on the subject establishes the resurrection of Christ, his second shows that, as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, and his third is directed to the consideration of the immortality and glory of our future state. On these subjects the following is selected; "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that *slept*. For since by man came death, by man came *also* the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all

die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.

My christian friends, if we may safely believe what we have quoted from Solomon, from the testimony of of our divine Redeemer, and from his eminent servant St. Paul, concerning them that are asleep, we have every consolation that we could reasonably require. If we believe that the spirit goes to God who gave it, that the dead are better off than the living, that all live unto God in the resurrection, and are equal to angels, that they die no more, that they are freed from sin, are raised in power, in glory, and in immortality, in the image of the heavenly man, what more could we ask concerning our dear connexions which have gone before us, or what more can we require in order to tranquilize our minds in the hour of death?

On the other hand, let us ask how we could enjoy any reasonable consolation concerning them which are asleep, if what we have proved from scripture be not believed?

It is true that many are earnestly contending that the doctrine which we have so clearly pointed out from the faithful word of truth, is a doctrine dangerous to the eternal welfare of immortal souls, and calculated to lead those who believe it into every kind of sin. But how can this be the case? Is it supposable that a revelation from God would in plain terms declare that which is dangerous to our eternal welfare, and calculated to lead us into sin? This is a reflection against God. Will any one come forward and acknowledge *that a belief in* all this grace and goodness of God

would lead them into sin? For instance, take this passage; "He that is dead is freed from sin." Suppose a person believes this divine truth, would this belief induce him to sin now? St. Paul, no doubt believed it; did it lead him into sin? Suppose the following case. One of you, my hearers, have unhappily imbibed a strong antipathy, even to hatred, against your neighbor; a friend of yours comes to you and tells you he has something of importance to communicate to you. You accommodate him with a convenient opportunity, and he says, I have come to tell you that in one week from now, you and your neighbor, whom you now so much dislike, will be on terms of perfect amity and peace, he has always been your friend and will certainly convince you, that in room of ever having injured you, he has been the means of all your prosperities. Suppose you believe this statement, would your belief lead you to hate your neighbor more than ever? No, it would have a directly contrary effect; you would love him the moment you believed it, and would long for the time to come that you might embrace him.

When Samuel told Saul that he should meet a company of prophets, and that the spirit of the Lord would come upon him, that he should be turned to another man, and prophecy with the prophets, this did not lead the young man into sin. Did the whole of this assembly really believe, that in a short time they should be in a state of immortal holiness and felicity, filled with the love of their heavenly Father, and employed in songs of everlasting praise to God and the lamb, such a belief, my friends, would now work by love and purify our hearts.

But the wisdom of this world has contrived a different way to make men love God, which is by threatening them with his everlasting displeasure. It has invented the most horrible reports and representations that imagination can possibly reach, concerning them that are asleep, by which sorrow is augmented to despair. Sermons full of the terror of eternal misery, and the representations of the dismal state of the dea

are delivered to enhance the sorrows of the bereaved. Little tracts are sent to people gratis, to inform them that the probability is, that their friends, who have left this world are in a state of torment. It is impossible, on considering such inventions and practices, not to think of the torn, the bloody coat presented to Jacob, accompanied with these words; "This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no." How many bereaved, afflicted mothers have read these tracts, and almost despairingly exclaimed, "It is my son's coat," without doubt my departed child is miserable.

Never did our blessed Saviour manifest such a spirit, never did he inculcate such doctrine. He who wept by the tomb of Lazarus, in sympathy with mourning sisters, who declared himself the resurrection and the life, hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. His doctrine is full of consolation, it is full of that hope which is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail, where our forerunner hath for us entered.

My friends, while looking round on perishable nature, while contemplating the loss of our dear connexions who have gone from this mortal state, let us "lay hold on this hope which is set before us," that we may not sorrow concerning them which are asleep, even as those who have no hope. But let us, with confidence in God our Father, and in Christ our Saviour, sing, with solemn joy in the words of Dr. Watts;

"Why do we mourn departing friends
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his arms.

LECTURE XXIV.

"THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE;" AND "THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION."

JOHN v. 28, 29.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.

THOUGH I have once spoken on these words in this place, and likewise been induced to explain them in a controversy that was published, it is still requested by some of the readers of these lectures that this passage should be noticed before the volume is completed. And as the common use of this text is in opposition to the doctrine set forth in these sermons, and especially to the use we made of the scriptures in our last, it is thought necessary that a discourse on this subject should be placed next in order.

This passage is one of a number which the popular doctrine of the church has applied to a future state of condemnation and misery. It has been used to set forth and maintain that those who do good in this world will be raised from the dead hereafter and be justified unto life in an immortal constitution, for the good works which they did in this world; and that those who do evil in this mortal state will be raised, at the same time, into an immortal constitution, and condemned to everlasting misery for the evil they did in this mortal constitution.

In the first place we shall suggest some arguments against the doctrine, for the support of which this text has been used.

In this doctrine there is a manifest want of that due

connexion between cause and effect, which is so wonderfully displayed in the natural order of things. While we are here in the body, if we feed on wholesome and nourishing food the natural effects are strength and health of body; but if we, from whatever cause, feed on that which is unwholesome or poisonous, the consequences are the reverse of the former, and sickness and weakness are sure to follow. But it would be evidently absurd to attempt to argue, on physical principles, that these effects, either health or sickness, strength or weakness will be experienced in a state of immortality after this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. Now it is plain from the scriptures, that all sin, all wickedness, and all evil doings are the works of the flesh; and there appears no more reason for supposing that the effects of these works are to extend into the immortal state, than for supposing that the effects of wholesome or unwholesome food are to extend to that state.

If one sow grain in a field in New-England, it follows of natural consequence that the harvest will be gathered from the same field; but there appears no natural connexion, as between cause and effect, between sowing grain in this country and gathering a harvest from it in Europe. St. Paul says; "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." This seems perfectly natural, because "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." But to argue that corruption may be gathered from an incorrutible state is to argue against the very nature of things.

The apostle to the Romans is explicit on this subject, where he says; "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

By this it is evident that condemnation cannot exist any longer than men walk after the flesh. But none pretend that any of the human family will walk after the flesh in that incorruptible state of which the apostle speaks, where he says; "This corruptible shall put

on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality."

We can easily discern the natural connexion between all the vices which are practised by men, and the infelicities which these vices introduce into society, and the unhappiness they occasion to those who practise them; but it is totally impossible to trace the connexion between these vices and a state of permanent misery in an immortal state.

Secondly; as this opinion of a state of immortal happiness for the good works of men in this life, and a state of endless misery for their evil works while here is supposed to fall under the notice of those scriptures which teach us that God will render to every man according to his works, it seems proper that we look to see if we can find such a proportion between the virtues which are practised in this life and a state of immortal felicity, and between the vices committed here and a state of endless torment as will justify this doctrine. The moment this inquiry is proposed the absurdity of the doctrine appears; for there is a much nearer proportion between the labor of one hour and the wealth of the whole world as its reward, than can be seen between all the good works which a man could perform during a long life, and a recompense of an immortal state of complete happiness. Nor is there so great a proportion between all the sins which one could possibly commit in this life and the recompense of a state of endless misery, as between the smallest offence ever committed on earth and a retaliation of the most severe and protracted tortures which could be inflicted in this mortal state. These statements are self-evident facts, which we know to be true as well as we know that a day is not as long as a year, or that one grain is not equal to a ton weight.

According to the scriptures, we are authorised to believe, that the blessings of the gospel in this life are far too great to be considered as being according to our works. St. Paul says; "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace

which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Again the same author says; "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Now if the salvation obtained in this life by the grace of God is too great to be considered according to our works, there surely is not the shadow of propriety in supposing that a state of permanent felicity in the eternal world is according to our works in this. But the proportion between our good works in this world and a state of endless happiness in the next is as near as between our sins here and a state of endless misery hereafter.

Thirdly; this doctrine of endless rewards and punishments is involved in an insuperable difficulty for the want of the power to distinguish between the meet subjects for these respective rewards.

What will this doctrine do, for instance, with David, king of Israel? That he did evil, and that to a most heinous degree is evident from the faithful records of scripture. Now if they who in this life have done evil are to be raised into an immortal state of misery, David, king of Israel, will be thus raised to condemnation. Will it be said that David became a good man, and did many good things after he committed the abominations which are recorded of him? This we are happy to acknowledge; but what does this prove, only that David was like other men, and and sometimes did that which was right and sometimes that which was wrong? For another instance, where will the doctrine under consideration place St. Paul in the eternal state? That he did evil in this world the scriptures as fully prove as they prove any thing. But it will be said that this man was reformed and became a good man; this too we are happy to acknowledge, but what more does this prove than that St. Paul was like David, and like other men, a changeable creature? who sometimes did right, at other times wrong? The fact is, as was fully shown in our lecture on the recompensing of the righteous and the wicked in the earth, all men are in some degree righteous and in some degree *wicked*. And it follows that if all that do good

in this world are to be eternally happy hereafter, all mankind will be happy; and on the other hand, if all who do evil in this life are to be endlessly miserable in the next, all men will be thus miserable!

Fourthly; the doctrine under consideration is absurd in that it supposes that the good works and virtues of men in this imperfect state are more meritorious than the perfect and permanent virtue which will characterize the blessed in heaven; for if that immortal state of holiness and felicity is merited by the virtue imperfectly practised in this mortal state, there remains no merit in the virtues practised in the future world, nor any reward for that superior degree of righteousness. And on the other hand, this doctrine involves another absurdity, in that it recompenses the sins of this life with a state of endless and positive misery, but reserves no punishment for the sins of which the souls of the miserable will be guilty in that state where they will sin without restraint. Why should imperfect righteousness merit an eternity of happiness, and yet perfect righteousness merit nothing? Why should the sins of this life be recompensed with a state of everlasting or eternal misery, and the entire sin of the eternal world go forever unpunished?

Once more; this doctrine maintains that God will punish his rational offspring without mercy, without designing their reconciliation or profit. This, of all the objections which we have to the doctrine under consideration is the greatest. This supposes that God possesses a worse disposition, and practises greater cruelty than the wicked possessor practice. All the cruelties of heathen idolatry are tender mercies, in comparison with the cruelty attributed to our heavenly Father by this doctrine. People are deceived by the names which superstition uses to identify this cruelty in God, but the name of a thing alters not its nature. Vindictive wrath, holy anger, retributive justice, are terms used to designate a property of the divine nature which, when examined impartially, and without a superstitious awe, *is found* to be worthy of no better name than unmer*ciful malevolence*! To attribute such a quality or char-

acter to God, we view as the vilest act that moral darkness has ever produced; and we reject the sentiment with the deepest horror.

Let it be distinctly noticed here, that this argument does not lie between the doctrine of endless punishment, and no punishment for sin; we have all along in these lectures maintained that sin is punished, but we find that it is punished in the world where it is, and not in an immortal state where it is not.

Having, as was proposed, suggested a few arguments against the doctrine for the support of which our text has been generally used, our next labor will be directed to bring the portion of scripture under consideration before the hearer in connexion with such other passages as relate to events which evidently belong to the present state of existence, but where language signifying a resurrection is used; at the same time carefully comparing with them those passages which evidently relate to a resurrection into an immortal state, that it may be clearly understood that the latter and former classes of scripture cannot, with any propriety, be applied to the same event.

The arguments to which we have attended in this discourse, are designed to show that the text under consideration ought not to be applied in the usual way, by showing that the doctrine supported by it when so used is not true. The arguments now designed will go to show that the scriptures make use of words signifying a resurrection, in a figurative sense, when nothing beyond this mortal state is intended, that the passage under consideration is of this description; and that it is proved to be so by comparing it with other passages which evidently have their application in time, and also by comparing it with passages which speak of a resurrection into an immortal state, by observing the difference there is between the two classes.

That our text evidently belongs to that class of scriptures which speak of a spiritual resurrection, or of a resurrection which has no allusion to a future state of being may be seen by attending to the context, which reads as follows; "Verily, verily, I say unto

you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Here it is perfectly plain that the death from which the believers had passed was of a moral, and not a literal kind; and it is perfectly plain also that the life into which they had already entered was of a spiritual nature, which believers enjoy by the means of believing in the word of Jesus in the present tense. And it is furthermore evident that the condemnation mentioned in the passage already quoted is a condemnation which is the consequence of unbelief in the present life, and is the same as is signified by the following words of Jesus: "He that believeth not is condemned already." The next words to those quoted from our context are the following: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." It is abundantly evident that the Saviour still continued to speak of the dead in trespasses and sins, of their hearing and believing his word, and of the spiritual life which faith in the gospel wrought in them. And it is also evident that his authority, which he here mentions, to execute judgment, administers that condemnation into which the unbeliever is brought.

Our text follows the words last quoted; "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which, all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Now as it is acknowledged by all that Jesus was speaking figuratively in the context, until he came to the words of our text, it seems entirely unwarranted to make him now, all of a sudden, speak of a literal resurrection. It is altogether more reasonable to suppose, that as he meant the dead in a moral or spiritual sense, by the dead who

should hear his voice and live, he now means the carnal state of carnal minds by the graves from which the dead were to come forth.

That the word graves is used figuratively in scripture we learn from the 37th of Ezekiel, where the prophet represents the return of the captivity of Israel from the countries where they had been scattered, first by the resurrection of the dry bones in the valley of vision,—and secondly, by bringing them out of their graves. And here we may remark, that there would be the same propriety in understanding the prophet to mean a figurative resurrection by the dry bones representing the return of Israel's captivity; but when he speaks of bringing them out of their graves, to mean their resurrection from their literal graves into an immortal state, as there is in explaining our text and context in the usual way.

There is a passage in the 12th of Daniel, which commentators very justly consider a parallel passage with our text; it reads as follows: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." It seems reasonable to suppose, that as Jesus came to fulfil the law and the prophets, he had his eye on this passage in Daniel when he spake the words of our text; and that he meant by those who were in the graves the same as Daniel meant by those who were asleep in the dust of the earth; and by those, who should come forth to the resurrection of life, he meant the same as Daniel did by those who should awake from the dust of the earth to everlasting life; and by those who should come forth to the resurrection of condemnation, the same as Daniel meant by those, who should come forth unto shame and everlasting contempt.

Will the hearer now say that all this may be, and that both Daniel and the Saviour were speaking of the resurrection of mankind to a state of immortal happiness and misery in a future world? To this we reply, when Jesus spoke to his disciples of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the calamities which should shortly come on the Jews, he uses the words of Daniel nearly verbatim when he speaks of the time of trouble. By this circumstance we are instructed that both Daniel and the Saviour spake of the same time, and of the same events, and that that time was when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans.

The true meaning of the words of Jesus and of the passage in Daniel appears to be this: those Jews who listened to the mild voice of the gospel, proclaimed by Christ and his Apostles, came forth from spiritual death to the life of faith in the new covenant; but those Jews, who rejected the doctrine of salvation, crucified the Saviour, and persecuted his apostles, were those who had done evil, and they were roused from the dormant state in which they lay, as in a covenant of death and a refuge of lies, by the voice of judgment, and come forth to the resurrection of that condemnation which is so particularly pointed out in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew; and which was illustrated in our lecture on that subject.

That the resurrection under consideration is not a resurrection from this mortal to an immortal state, may be made to appear by comparing the account of it with the account given of the resurrection into a state of immortality, which we find in several passages, and which were noticed in our last lecture.

In the account of the resurrection noticed in our text, some are raised to life and some to condemnation; and this account we have seen agrees so well with the testimony quoted from Daniel, that no doubt remains that the Saviour and the prophet spake of the same event. But can we make St. Paul's account of the resurrection of all mankind into an immortal state agree with these several testimonies so as to be satisfied

that the apostle was treating on the same subject of which Daniel and the Saviour treated?

Jesus says: that they that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. Daniel says: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall come forth, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." St. Paul says; "As in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive." And he is particular in stating the constitution which all men will receive in the resurrection of which he speaks. It is spiritual, incorruptible, immortal, and glorious, it is the image of the Lord from heaven. He makes no distinction. He says nothing of the good works of some and the evil works of others. His testimony is, in fact, directly against any distinction or difference in that immortal state. All are made alive in Christ; and as this life is spiritual, incorruptible and immortal, this testimony agrees with the testimony of Jesus to the Sadducees on the same subject of the resurrection, in which he says, that in the resurrection they are the children of God, equal unto the angels, and can die no more.

In his debate with the Sadducees, Jesus gave no intimation that any would rise from the dead to a state of condemnation, but was particular in saying that all live unto God.

In our present light of this subject, we can plainly see, that by supposing that Jesus spake in our text of the same subject of which he spake in his reply to the Sadducees, we make him contradict himself. And by supposing that our text is a testimony of the same event of which St. Paul spake in his argument on the resurrection in the 15th of the first of Corinthians, we set the testimony of Jesus and St. Paul at an irreconcilable variance.

Our present subject may be represented by supposing, that a traveller returns to this town from the state of Vermont, and informs us that in consequence of a disturbance among the convicts in the State prison, the prisoners were all brought out under sufficient

guards, to be examined and tried for their conduct. This trial, our traveller informs us, finally terminated in the solitary confinement of a large number of the leaders of the disturbance, but in the liberation from prison of many who were found to be meritorious in their conduct in endeavoring to suppress and prevent the wicked designs of the others.

This traveller being a man of respectable standing in society, and of undoubted reputation, no one is disposed to doubt the truth of the testimony which he he has given on this subject. Not long after having this information in the way here related, our traveller returns from a tour through New Hampshire, and informs us that the new governor in that state has seen cause to set all the prisoners in the state at liberty, and that he was an eye witness of the fact. For want of proper caution some of us now confound the two reports, and think that these several relations are concerning what took place relative to the prisoners in Vermont.

In this way we should make the testimony of our traveller destroy itself and the veracity of its author. And yet his whole testimony in both cases, when understood according to the different subjects related, and the proper distinctions preserved according to the plainest sense of the several accounts given, all appears clear and without the least contradiction.

By applying, in an indiscriminate manner, those passages of scripture which specially belong to the temporal, mutable state of man in this life, and those which speak of an immortal state, all to the future existence of mankind, the greatest absurdities have been supported by the scriptures. In the same way the dispute between those who contend for salvation by the agency of the creature, and those who maintain that works are out of the question relative to salvation has been protracted for ages in the christian church. And yet if the passages of scripture, which are quoted on both sides of the argument were applied to their respective subjects there would be no room for dispute or occasion for any difference of sentiment.

For instance, the account we have of the judgment in the 25th of Matthew proceeds according to the works of those who are judged; and those who are welcome to the kingdom, are justified according to their works, and those who are sentenced to punishment are so condemned according to their conduct. Now as this passage is applied to the eternal state of the unseen world by both parties in the dispute just named, those who rest the final justification of the creature on his works seem to have a decided advantage in the dispute. And it is all in vain for the opposer to try to reconcile this passage with his notion of justifying the creature to everlasting life in the eternal world without any reference to his good works in this world. This he will not attempt to do: but in order to do away the force of this judgment, he quotes some passages which speak of grace to the exclusion of works; such as the following; "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast. Now to him that worketh the reward is not reckoned of grace but of debt; but to him that worketh not but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted unto him for righteousness." As it is perfectly evident that these passages, on the very face of them, were designed to set forth the grace and salvation of God in a way to exclude the works of the saved as the ground of such salvation, the argument now fairly turns in favor of the other side; for here are more passages than the one brought in favor of the contrary side.

What is the next thing to be done? Does he who predicates salvation on works undertake to show that the passages last quoted do not indicate the fact for which they are adduced? No, for this would be labor lost: it would be as easy to prove that these passages *mean nothing*. What then does he do? He

proceeds to quote some more scripture on the other side, such as the following; "The willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land, but if ye rebel ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him. For the son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or bad." As it is perfectly evident that these last quoted passages do not indicate that men are justified without good works, but in consequence of them, the dispute stands exactly as it did when it began, and where it must stand until these disputants come to a determination to understand particular passages of the scriptures according to the particular subjects to which they respectively belong.

All those passages, which speak of judging and rewarding men according to their works have their true and just application to that divine economy in which our heavenly Father administers to his moral offspring that discipline which grows from his love and faithfulness and which our imperfection requires.

On the other hand, all those passages which speak of the abundant grace of God, of his great love to sinners, of his saving us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given unto us in Christ Jesus before the world began, have their true and just application to that divinely gracious economy of the Father of our spirits, in which he has made ample provisions for the spiritual and eternal welfare of all mankind. And if we are careful

to keep the different subjects of which the scriptures treat, as distinct from each other as the divine testimony requires, we shall never apply the passage under consideration to the immortal state of man, nor is it believed by your servant, that any other passage can be found, which speaks of rewarding men for their good works, and of punishing others for evil works, which can, with the least color of propriety be applied to the state of man when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible incorruption.

To pretend that it is not convenient or proper for men to be rewarded in this world according to their works here, is more absurd than it would be to argue, that it is not convenient or proper for children to receive rewards of merit, and chastisements for disobedience at the school where they receive their education. And to contend that all the good works, and all the evil works done in this mortal state are to be judged and recompensed in the eternal world, is a thousand times more unreasonable than it would be for a parent of vast wealth to go to the school master who educated his children and get a particular account of every thing his children did while at school, and then proceed to make his last will and testament according to that account.

To conclude, while our text assures us, that good works will never go unrewarded, nor evil works unrecompensed, it by no means intrudes on the eternal inheritance given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; nor does it in any way contradict the testimony, that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

LECTURE XXV.

ALL GOD'S JUDGMENTS ISSUE IN LOVE.

ZEPHANIAH, iii. 17.

He will rest in his love.

In this short book of the prophecy of Zephaniah there is much said on the subject of the sins of various nations, and of the sore punishments which the divine ruler had seen fit to execute upon them for their correction, and as an admonition to his chosen people, the Jews.

The design of the judgments of God is most clearly expressed in the following, recorded in our context: "Therefore, wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I shall rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

The account here given by the prophet, concerning the indignation and fierce anger of the Lord, is of a very different nature from the account of the same subject, which is current in our times. The divine indignation or anger according to our christian doctors, is totally unmerciful; and those on whom it is fully and completely executed, no more than begin to feel its horrors in this world, but are duly prepared by an astonishing miracle, to endure the fierceness of its burning forever in the eternal world. In the days of divine inspiration and prophecy, when men "spake as

they were moved by the Holy Ghost," no such horrible sentiments were held up to the people. Then the desolation of cities, the captivity of their inhabitants, plagues, famines, and pestilences were among the usual denunciations of the judgments of God; but now, nothing that can be suffered in this world seems to answer the purpose; and our *wise* men pretend to know the particulars of the eternal world much better than of this, and speak of the horrors of future condemnation, and of the indignation of the Lord in that state, without the smallest hesitation. Whether they are correct, or the inspired prophets, we are at liberty to judge for ourselves. It is a plain fact that their accounts differ, and that as widely as day from night.

According to the prophet in the passage just cited, the indignation, even all the fierce anger of the Lord is poured out on the whole earth. Nothing is said of reserving any for a future state. And what is worthy of special notice is, after all this fierce anger of the Lord is poured out on the people, and the whole earth is devoured with the fire of his jealousy, God says, "then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, and serve him with one consent." So that the very same people who suffer all God's fierce anger, are thereby prepared to learn a pure language in which they shall all call on the name of the Lord, with dispositions and hearts to serve him.

As consequences resulting to the house of Israel, from the execution of the divine indignation, the following is recorded by the prophet; "In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me; for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride; and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shall not see evil any more. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing."

In this most interesting representation we are led to contemplate the happy issue of the judgments of God, even all his fierce anger, in the salvation of his people, in their rest and joy. Even God himself is represented as rejoicing over them with joy, and as finding rest in his love toward them.

In order that one may rest in love the following particulars seem to be necessary.

I. Love must be holy and all its desires righteous. And,

II. The desires of love must all be accomplished in their fullest extent.

To a moral being an unholy love and unlawful desires are a source of inquietude, and the more such love and desires are indulged the greater is the infelicity occasioned by them. But the contrary is the effect of a holy love and of righteous and lawful desires. The more they are indulged the greater is the satisfaction, and the more perfect that rest which results from such indulgence. The love of our heavenly Father toward his offspring is a holy love, and all its desires are lawful and right. It is the holiness of love and the lawfulness of its desires which justifies all the means which are necessary to carry these desires into effect.

This subject may be represented by the love of parents toward their children. The parental love is lawful and all its desires are righteous. It looks on children with strong desires for their improvement and happiness. If they are disobedient, love desires their reformation; and it is the purity of this love and the righteousness of its desires that justify those rebukes, warnings, and chastisements which are necessary for the bringing of the disobedient to submit to those wholesome precepts which are alone designed for their benefit. Take away this parental love, and remove

the desire of doing good to the disobedient child, and every rebuke, every admonition, and every punishment inflicted, would be as destitute of righteousness, as the heart of the parent is of love. But where this holy love and these pure desires are in exercise, they fully justify the greatest severity which may be necessary for the good of the disobedient. And here let us cautiously observe, that the parent never finds rest until all that love desires is accomplished. While stubbornness and disobedience remain in the child, and during the administration of chastisement, the parent has no rest. Anxiety, pity, grief, love and tender affections mingle in the feeling heart with indignation, severity and faithfulness; but when this stubbornness is subdued, and the disobedient heart brought to submit, how calm, how quiet is the rest which the parent finds in that victorious love, which has now conquered all opposition, and carried into effect its utmost desires. If the parent could find rest in the administration of punishment, then, in order to continue this rest, the punishment would be protracted; but rest is taken after the labor is done, and the longer the labor continues, the longer rest is deferred.

To apply our metaphor, we may observe, that God's love toward mankind is a holy love, and all the desires of that love are righteous. The holiness of his love, and the righteousness of its desires sanctify his severest judgments and direct them all to the accomplishment of the desires of love.

The figure of expression used in our text is very strong; it seems to represent the divine Being as being in want of rest from the exercise of his severity and indignation, and as finding that rest in his love toward those whom he had chastised, by pouring on them all his fierce anger, which terminated in their subjection to his will. But the scriptures, without intending to represent the Almighty as being changeable, use such metaphors for the purpose of conveying an idea of the ultimate design and goodness of God, in all his works.

Where we have an account of the creation of all

things, we are informed that God proceeded with his work day after day for six days, and when he had ended his work, he rested on the seventh. But here let us remark, that he rested in his love, for he was able, after taking a perfect survey of all his works, to pronounce the whole "very good." If there had been any part of the creation which would not answer the purpose for which it was made, God would not have pronounced it good, nor could he have loved that which was not good, nor could he have rested in his love.

Man was the last work which the divine Creator performed, and man he made in his own image. Man he styles his offspring, he calls himself our Father, and he directs his providence and grace in a way to provide for us, and to bring us to the enjoyment of himself.

When man had sinned, and God came to him in the cool of the day, he pronounced his judgments with such limitations as to manifest his purpose in the final deliverance of his sinful children from the power of the tempter by the seed of the woman who should bruise his head. Thus we see that God rests no where but in his love.

Had the Creator, on this occasion, denounced on man the malediction of never-ending misery, according to the doctrine of our catechism; and had it been his pleasure to inform them, as the writers of our creeds have informed us, that by this first transgression the whole posterity of Adam and Eve had become liable to the pains of hell forever, we could hardly find how to reconcile this doctrine with the idea that our heavenly Father rests no where but in his love.

It may be profitable in this place, though it be painful, to spend a few reflections on the resting-place, which the wisdom of this world has invented for the Father of our spirits. This invention, in order to accommodate our heavenly Father with the most perfect and quiet rest, has assigned a great part of his rational offspring to the most exquisite torments which improved imagination has been able to suggest, and has assigned the execution of this torture to him! That pa-

rents may not only see this subject, but feel a little by having it represented in subordination to our understanding, we may suppose a similar invention for the accommodation of the parent of a numerous family, to give him the most perfect rest. Thus three quarters of his children are to suffer the most exquisite torments which human invention can devise; and to have this torture so administered as to be protracted for a long time, and the parent himself must execute this punishment!

Parents, would you call this a bed of roses? Do you wish to repose your weary limbs, after carefully nursing and bringing up children, on such down as this? Disgusted, you reply, why do you torture our feelings and greet our ears with such unnatural similes?

We deserve to have our feelings harrowed with these thorns, with these briars and thistles, for we have spread them out by our wicked inventions for our merciful and compassionate Father in heaven to rest himself on to all eternity! The creeds of the christian church now contain the invention under consideration; our preachers dwell upon it, and on its different parts, with an earnestness by which they evince their zeal for God; and professors patiently hear this doctrine proclaimed, and pronounce it wholesome orthodoxy. As long as this remains to be the case, a hope is entertained that people in one way or another, will be made to hear their doctrine applied in a way to make them feel its effects.

However men may err in their inventions, however they may attribute the worst of designs to God, he is of one mind and none can turn him. The love in which he rested on the seventh day, after he had created all things, is the same love which he manifested after man had sinned. This is the love which he has had in view in the administration of all his judgments, and the same which he has manifested through Jesus for the salvation of mankind from sin and death. The hearer will recollect that we have said that in order for one to rest in love, all that love desires must be se-

complished. This idea is within your easy comprehension. If one has a desired object, an object of the most affectionate regard in view, but great difficulties and dangers lie in the way of obtaining this object, you know that this condition is by no means calculated to give rest. But if the difficulties become surmounted, and the dangers removed, and the longed for object finally obtained, the successful soul finds rest in love. Thus Joseph the persecuted brother, tenderly loved his brethren, suffered many things for their profit, overcome all embarrassments and finally received them all under his safe protection and found a calm, a sweet repose in his love. To prove them, to try them, for a season he treated them roughly, and with severity. He accused them of being spies, come to see the nakedness of the land. He kept Simeon bound while he sent the rest to their families. He directed the silver cup to be deposited in Benjamin's sack, he gave orders for his arrest, and greatly tried the hearts of those who had sold him; but during all this time Joseph did not rest in this manifestation of anger. How often did he weep alone with love, pity, and grief for his brethren; but when he had humbled them enough and made himself known to them, embraced them all and granted them forgiveness, he rested in his love. Had he failed in his heart's desire of seeing all his brethren duly humbled, and had two thirds of the whole utterly refused to acknowledge their faults, or submit themselves to him, we may reasonably suppose, that he would not have enjoyed that rest in his love which he did when he fed them all at his own table.

Let the mind pass from this circumstance to the consideration of the love of God to mankind and to consider the extent of mercy's design as manifested through Jesus. The following passages relate to this subject. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while

we were yet enemies, Christ died for us. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." By these passages we learn that the grand design of the Father's love in sending the son into the world was to save the world, and this design must be fully accomplished in order for the Father to rest in his love. My friends, you know that love which desires that which we can never obtain, in room of affording us rest, gives us uneasiness. Now if the design or desire of the Father's love is the salvation of the world, how can he ever find rest in his love if this desire is never accomplished? But he worketh all things after the council of his own will. His judgments and his mercies will be employed and well directed to their object, until the vast design of love is completed in the reconciliation of all things to God, who will forever rest in his love. Thus are the judgments of God explained in the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

The divine economy in the moral system may be represented by a bountiful and benevolent providence, by which our temporal wants are satisfied. Winter, in which appears no promise of bread in future, spring, in which promises but just make their appearance, and summer full of labor and toil precede the bountiful autumn, when rest and festivity cause to forget the labors of the past seasons, and we find that all has happily terminated for good.

This general subject may be contemplated to advantage, by taking into consideration the labors and sufferings of our blessed Redeemer, all which terminate in giving him rest in his love. After the prophet Isaiah gave a most circumstantial account of the Saviour's

sufferings and the object of them, in which account he states the following: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed," he further says; "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many for he shall bear their iniquities." St. Paul informs us that the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all men to be testified in due time, and that he by the grace of God tasted death for every man. And St. John says, he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Jesus himself says; the true shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. Now these passages all go to show what was the desire of the Saviour's heart, "who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." And they contain evidence that the whole of his desire will finally be accomplished. When this is done, it will be evident that he rests in his love.

When Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and said; "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate; he further added; for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." It is worthy of notice, that in this instance, and on this most interesting occasion, the Saviour terminated his prophetic malediction in a way to give place to his blessed appearance and his being hailed with "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Thus the blessed Jesus rested no where but in his love.

When on the cross, at the close of his sufferings, the dear Redeemer manifested that love was his resting place. He prayed for his enemies, saying; "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Keep in mind that the whole which love desires must be accomplished in order that love may give

rest. If the Saviour loved his enemies, if he loved sinners, if he designed their redemption, their forgiveness, and salvation, can he ever rest in this love unless this desire be granted? "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." But he never can be satisfied with any thing short of the joy that was set before him, for which he endured the cross, and despised the shame.

If, as has been erroneously held, and is now believed and taught, after the dispensation of divine mercy through Jesus Christ, shall have accomplished all it ever will accomplish; if after it has reconciled all that it ever will reconcile, millions are to remain in eternal rebellion under the dominion of sin, darkness and death; and if the same blessed mediator, who gave himself a ransom for all men, who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, who by the grace of God tasted death for every man, is to execute on those wretched millions never ending wrath, how is it that he can ever rest in his love?

The prophet Isaiah calls the promised Shiloh, "the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace." But with what propriety he can be called a father to those for whom he has no mercy is utterly inconceivable; or how he is properly called the prince of peace, when he is the administrator of endless wrath on his own subjects, is truly difficult to understand.

Let us again repeat, in order that love may give rest, all that love desires must be accomplished. St. Paul exhorted husbands to love their "wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." According to this declaration Christ gave himself for the church because he loved it, and because he loved it he undertook to sanctify and cleanse it, that he might free it from every spot and wrinkle, and present it to himself a glorious church. This same Apostle says that Christ gave himself a ransom

for all men. All men are therefore of his church. His church was unsanctified, unclean, full of spots and wrinkles, and inglorious; but by the ministration of the word of life, he will sanctify and cleanse it. But short of the completion of this work, he cannnot rest in his love. The uncleanness of human nature was the reason why his love moved him to the ministration of his cleansing word, and as long as one spot or wrinkle remains the washing must be continued; but when sin is finished, when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest, then will that love which moved the Saviour to give himself for us, afford a heaven of rest to him whose soul travailed for man's salvation.

Our subject may be profitably contemplated by applying it to the love which actuates the christian's heart; and especially to the love which moves the faithful minister of Jesus Christ to be vigilant in his ministry. And here let us remark, that as Jesus undertook the ministry of his grace from pure love to sinners, so it is indispensably necessary that the ministers of his word of life should have the same love which moved their divine master to our redemption. If Jesus had had no love for mankind, if he had been as strenuous for man's endless misery as many appear to be in our day, he never would have given himself for us. Remember the caution which our Saviour observed with Peter. "Simon Peter, lovest thou me?" being answered in the affirmative, says; "feed my sheep." He did not say, terrify and frighten my sheep; but feed my sheep; and Peter did most faithfully feed the sheep; and it was because of the love which he bore to the chief shepherd, and to the sheep. And this was the case with the whole of that immortal band of Apostles who went forth to feed the flock, which Christ had purchased with his own blood, and to wash the church with the washing of water by the word. They labored, they suffered, but they had peace and rest. They rested in that triumphant love which incited them to the work of the ministry. But this love could have given them no rest, if it had not *the* power to promise success to their labors.

For many centuries the ministry in the christian church has seemed to labor more to persuade people into a belief of the general failure of the gospel dispensation, than to inspire a hope that its success will eventually correspond with the universal and impartial love of the Saviour: and though the preachers have uniformly professed great love for sinners, and a willingness to exert all their means to prevent the everlasting ruin of souls, yet they have as constantly insisted that they shall rejoice in heaven to see the unconverted part of their congregations in a state of hopeless misery! But how is this consistent with the idea of resting in their love? It is easy to conceive how the minister of the word rests in his love to the people and to the gospel, if he has the prospect bright before him, of the final, full, and entire success of the ministry.—St. Paul says; "Having this ministry we faint not." But what is the peculiar nature of this ministry which caused the Apostles not to faint? See the answer in the same Apostle's words; "Who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Possessing the love for mankind which the Apostles evidently did, they must have fainted if their ministry had been a ministry of death; but their ministry was a ministry of life, of righteousness, and reconciliation, in which they labored that they might "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

The same spirit of love, which gives rest to the faithful minister of the word of life, is the rest of every true believer. It is acknowledged by all denominations of christians, that the spirit of Christ is the spirit of love, and that this love extends to all mankind. With the different persuasions among us, there is but one sentiment on this subject. All christian people profess to love the whole human family, and to pray for the salvation of all. Now since this is uniformly the case, let us ask, what rest can they have while exercising this generous love and benevolence, and yet believing that millions of their fellow creatures must inevitably, not only be excluded the joys and peace

of heaven, but be the subjects of positive misery for ever?

It is true we have been told the extravagant story that the saints in heaven will rejoice forever in the everlasting misery of the unconverted. We have been told, that parents will rejoice in the sentence of endless condemnation passed on their own offspring in the eternal world! But will this be resting in love? If parents have as much love for their children in the next state as they have here, will that love allow them to rest in heaven, while their offspring are tortured in everlasting burnings? No, allowing the doctrine of future endless misery, those who rest must rest in eternal hatred! but in hatred there is no rest.

My brethren, did you ever find rest in a spirit of enmity? in a disposition to rejoice in another's misery? Is it possible for unmerciful wrath to give rest? No, if we ever find rest either in this world or in the next, it must be in love. And love, that it may give rest, must have its vast desires accomplished.

What an unbounded field of glory and beauty our subject presents to our rejoicing eyes! The vast, the unbounded, the incomprehensible love of our heavenly Father, is his eternal rest. After all his judgments, after all his righteous indignation is fulfilled on all his enemies, he will retain his unchangeable love to all his offspring, and rest forever in seeing all the desires of his universal, impartial love fully accomplished.

Jesus, the mediator, who loved us and gave himself for us, shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, shall see all the desires of his heart accomplished, shall have the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, and shall rest in his love for mankind forever.

The apostles of the Lamb, who following the steps and the example of their divine master, loved the human race, labored in the ministry of righteousness, and reconciliation, suffered the loss of all earthly things for the establishment and promotion of the truth, shall see all the desires of their love fulfilled, and rest in their love.

All the faithful successors of the Apostles, in the ministry, who have been excited by the powerful influences of the spirit of love, to fulfil their ministry, in the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God, shall see all the desires of their love fulfilled in the reconciliation of all things to God, through Jesus, and shall rest forever in their love.

Every true believer in Jesus, who hath been quickened by the spirit of the gospel, which is the spirit of love, shall see the boundless desires of his heart fulfilled in the subjection of every creature in heaven and on earth, to the authority and love of Christ, and shall forever rest in his love.

To conclude—My friends, let us never seek rest but in love. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." "Let us love one another, for love is of God." "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

LECTURE XXVI.

THE HEALING EFFICACY OF CHRIST'S DOCTRINE.

MARK v. 31.

Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, who touched me?

THE occasion of these words was the following circumstance. One of the rulers of the synagogue, of the name of Jairus, came to Jesus, and falling down at his feet, besought him most earnestly, saying, "my little daughter lies at the point of death. I pray thee come and lay thy hands upon her, that she may be healed, and she shall live." The compassionate Saviour was moved at a petition which flowed so directly from a parent's heart, and which indicated such strong faith in his power to heal. He immediately went with the afflicted father. No sooner was it known that he was going to heal the sick child, than a great crowd of people followed and pressed hard upon him. They were, no doubt, extremely anxious to be eye witnesses of the miracle. In this vast concourse there was a woman who had been afflicted for twelve years with a distressing disorder, "and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." This afflicted woman had lost all hopes of recovery by the assistance of human aid; indeed she was poor and pennyless. Her little estate had already passed over into the hands of her physicians, who in room of doing her any good, had caused her many painful sufferings. Destitute, alone and friendless, a thought came into her mind, and it immediately formed itself into a resolution accompanied with a perfect confidence, that if she could by any possible means, press through the crowd of peo

ple so as to but touch the clothes of Jesus she should be made whole.

It is scarcely possible to imagine a circumstance more calculated to excite exertion than this. She was, no doubt, a very feeble person, a great multitude of people were crowding, and pressing to keep close to Jesus that they might not miss of seeing the miracle. The difficulty of getting through the crowd was, no doubt very great; but salvation was so near and so desirable, that it invigorated her feeble system to such a degree that her efforts were availing. It is not unlikely that we may form a pretty correct idea of the manner of this woman's exertions on this occasion. She would naturally direct her eyes toward Jesus and get a glimpse of him as often as possible; when it so happened that she could, by the greatest exertion get before one of the crowd, she never let the opportunity slip; one step gained was cautiously kept; she was careful that no one should crowd her back; she looked well to her feet that they should not slide; spake not a word to any one lest she might miss an opportunity to advance; the nearer she gets to the prize the stronger and more active she grows, till she eagerly reaches forth her hand and touches the garment of the Saviour. She now realizes her faith, her confidence has not deceived her, she is made whole.

Though this woman did not once think that the Saviour was apprehensive of her approach, we have good reason to believe that he who knew the very thoughts of men's hearts, who saw Nathaniel under the fig-tree, knew her case, her faith and the efforts she had made to come to him. Immediately after this woman touched his garment, he turned himself about in the press and, as if surprised that any one should touch him, said, who touched my clothes? The disciples, being ignorant of the particular case, and surprised that their master should ask who touched him, when he had, for some time, been pressed with the crowd of people all around him, said to him, "thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou who touched *me?*" *Jesus* made them no reply, but cast his eyes

round to see her, who had done this thing, when the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, come and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, "daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

Our subject, as it now lies before us, seems to suggest the following particulars for consideration.

I. What appertains to the subject of the power of Jesus to heal the natural disorders of the human body.

II. The consideration of this power as indicating the moral excellency of the doctrine of Jesus, and its efficacy in removing the moral and spiritual maladies of mankind.

III. The similarity between the disorders of the body and those of the mind.

IV. As there were no natural complaints that were too malignant to be cured by the miraculous power of Jesus, it seems to justify the inference that there are no cases of moral or spiritual disorder, which are beyond the reach of the divine efficacy of his grace.

V. The natural inducements which led the infirm to Jesus, may be used to represent those of a moral nature which lead the rational mind to the doctrine of Christ.

VI. A noticeable difference in the motives of people who crowd the places of public worship where the healing doctrine of Jesus is preached, is signified by the crowding multitude who pressed continually on Jesus, and the special cause of the woman's approach. And

VII. The resolution and perseverance of this woman may be used in a way to encourage sinners to come to Christ.

But that the hearer may not be troubled to retain these particulars, the whole subject, we say, is to be seen by examining it in a natural and moral sense.

The miraculous power of Jesus was so manifested, that even his bitterest enemies did not pretend to deny that miracles were wrought by him; they however, attributed that power to an evil demon, or Beelzebub,

The miracles of Jesus were done in such a public manner, and in such vast numbers, that not only his keenest eyed enemies who surely would have been able to have detected any imposition on the public, were fully convinced. But the thousands who were healed of all manner of diseases, remaining among the people of different parts of the country, were living testimonies by which these miracles were established, and the fame of the divine physician sent abroad through every region.

Respecting these miraculous cures, it is of importance to notice, that no partiality was ever known to have any influence in the bestowment of such favors; nor have we any account, that any worthiness in the subject was ever inquired for, or that any known unworthiness excluded any from these mercies. In these particulars the miraculous cures wrought by Jesus, bear the indubitable marks of the true divinity. Had Jesus made any distinctions, and had he healed some and refused to heal others in the same condition, the use of his miraculous power would have exhibited infallible marks of the wisdom of this world, which has for ages subverted the gospel of Christ, by teaching for doctrine the vain tradition, that some only of the human race were elected from all eternity unto everlasting life, while the residue were by as early a decree, reprobated fr m the divine favor forever. But the blessed Jesus neither preached nor practiced such a sentiment. Again, had the Saviour been careful to confer his miraculous favors according to character, had he minutely investigated the conduct of the infirm and sick and confined his favors to the virtuous, he would then have given, by way of example, some support to the doctrine of men, in which they have confined the favor and mercy of God to the virtuous. But Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

We have every reason necessary for believing, that the gracious design of our heavenly Father, in giving such power to Jesus, extended beyond the temporal benefits received by those who were healed of their in-

firmities. It is generally argued by christians, that the miracles of Jesus were designed as evidences of his Messiahship or divine mission; and this we may safely believe, and yet believe that the design extends still further. What benefit, we may ask, is there in believing that Jesus was the Messiah? The answer is, that we may receive him as a divine teacher, and believe in his doctrine. But the inquiry does not end here. What benefit is there in believing his doctrine?—The answer is, a belief in his doctrine is a remedy for the moral evil of our nature; or in other words, the doctrine of Jesus is a cure for all the disorders of sin, and our belief in this doctrine is a mean of its healing effects in the mind. If the doctrine of Jesus Christ were not possessed of this power, it seems impossible to understand the great necessity of its being propagated in our world.

The notion that this doctrine consists of a long string of abstract articles of faith, which have been written into human creeds, the belief of which is proposed in the gospel as a condition of our being made eternally happy in a future state, is so perfectly destitute of reason, and so foreign from the nature of events which take place in the system of causes and effects, that it is by no means entitled to any share of our confidence.

The belief of the truth itself is of no other advantage than its effects in delivering from sin; and changing the mind into the divine image. The miraculous cures wrought by the Saviour consisted in removing the natural disorders of the human body, so that the leper was cleansed, the deaf made to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, and the dead to live. And in all these cases the divine efficacy of his doctrine was most plainly indicated. For it is the knowledge of the divine and glorious truths which compose his doctrine that cleanses from sin and moral defilement. God does not forgive the wicked as a compensation for believing in certain tenets, but forgiveness of sin means no more nor less than is expressed in the following words of scripture; "In that day there shall be a foun-

tain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness. Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Between the disorders of the human body, and those of the mind, there seems to be no small resemblance. Both are the natural productions of the constitution of the creature, who was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Both are promoted by the indulgence of appetites and passions, both become inveterate by habit. Natural blindness and ignorance of divine things are so very similar that the scriptures use the same word to signify both, and the Saviour represents sinners by those who are sick.

If the mind of the hearer has consented to the idea that the miraculous cures performed by Jesus on the bodies of people, were designed to indicate the power of his grace to cleanse from sin and moral defilement, we may proceed to consider one of the most glorious truths, which the gospel was designed to reveal. This great truth is seen in the following argument. As there were no natural disorders which were too stubborn for the miraculous power of Jesus to remove, no demoniac so raving that Jesus could not clothe him in his right mind, none so strongly locked in the dark house of death that he could not call them from thence, we infer, that no degree or description of sin, however chronical, however inveterate, is beyond the power of divine mercy to wash away.

We are informed that there was one instance of a possessed of a devil whose case was beyond the power of the disciples of Jesus; but Jesus cast him out, and told the disciples that their unbelief was the reason that they failed of this miracle. The same may be the case with many even now, they can find sins which

they think cannot be washed away, but all this is owing to their unbelief.

The case of Lazarus was attended with peculiar circumstances which may be profitably noticed in the present argument. When Jesus advanced toward the sepulchre, the weeping sister Martha exclaimed, "Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days." Probably her thoughts were the following. Hadst thou but come in season, such is thy power, thou mightst have prevented my brother's death, or even after his breath had left his body, possibly hadst thou been here to exert thy power before corruption had begun its work, the event might have been to the praise of thy glorious power and to our consolation. But the precious time is gone, the opportunity is lost, four days have surely carried my brother beyond the reach of thy restoring power. But notwithstanding all this reasoning, at the words of Jesus, "Lazarus, come forth," the dead was raised.

Like faithless Martha, many who profess to be the disciples of Jesus, have made their calculations, by which they have bounded the grace of God, and carried sinners of a certain character beyond those limits. It is frequently the topic of our preachers, to set forth, in the most lamentable language, the awful situation of thousands and millions of their fellow-creatures, who, they say, will come short of the divine mercy, through delay. Had they exerted their powers in season, had they improved their precious moments of probation, all would have been well and the prize secure. But it is now too late. The door of mercy is shut. And though the poor wretched sinner would now give a thousand worlds, if he had them, for one hour in which he might repent, he is denied the privilege of repenting forever.

With such appalling language as this, and more to the utmost stretch of imagination assisted by the blindest enthusiasm, the feeble nerves and delicate minds of women and children are terrified into a kind of religious delirium. But surely one plain testimony of divine truth removes all those gloomy fears. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

But it is not enough that we prove the proposition that, the grace of God revealed in the gospel is sufficient to take away the sin of the world; it is of still greater consequence that the mind should understand the nature of this great truth. For this kind of knowledge is that which changes the mind from darkness to light, and delivers it from the reigning power of sin to the love of holiness and to the obedience of the just.

The doctrine of Jesus Christ reveals the divine character to the understanding whereby the sinner is brought to know God, whom to know is life eternal; God is love, and love has the power to transform the mind into its own image; God is justice, and justice forms its own character in the heart of its moral subject; God is truth, and truth drives out error and takes up its residence in the soul; God is holiness, and holiness washes out every stain of sin, and implants in the mind a love to its divinity. The sinner thus saved, thus delivered from sin, is made rationally happy in the enjoyment of those moral perfections which are the natural elements a moral being. All that can be termed sinfulness is just as contrary to the health of the soul, as disorders of the body are to the health of the body. And all the salvation which a sick man needs is to be delivered from his sickness, and all the salvation a sinner needs is to be saved from his sins.

The opinion that a time will ever come when it will not be just in the nature of things for a sinner to repent, embraces and necessarily implies the absurdity that it will be just for the sinner to continue in sin!

But the common doctrine of the church contends that if men do not repent of their sins in this life, they will not be allowed the privilege of repenting in a future state, and therefore must remain sinful forever. Now all these notions are the offspring of imagination, and have no foundation in reason nor in the scripture of truth. The gospel was sent into this world for the purpose of reforming mankind, and reconciling the nations to God. It was needed here, because it is here *that men are sinners.* If it could be proved that the

next state of existence is one subject to these moral infirmities, what reason can there be offered that their remedy will not be found in that state as well as in this. We have physicians and medicine in this mortal state, and it is thought by some that there are medicines in every climate sufficient for the disorders of that climate. Now if the next state be incident to sickness and disorders, what reason can there be offered that there will not be physicians and suitable medicines in that state to cure those disorders?—When the great physician of souls was here on earth, he was never known to shun a place because sickness or wickedness was there. He, no doubt, knew that legions possessed the man in the country of the Gadarenes, yet he went there, and there he cast out the devils; and if on the other side of death legions of demons possess men no doubt Jesus will in due time cast them out.

The hearer is cautioned against supposing that we allow that the next state will be subject to sickness or to sin; we distinctly say that the evidence of this is wanting both in scripture and reason.

As the inconveniences of sickness and disorder are sufficient to induce the patient to apply to a physician, so the painful infelicities of sin are the proper inducements to apply to the spiritual physician, whose doctrine is amply efficacious in removing our sins from us. The supposition that has taken the lead of the minds of religious people, that it would be desirable to live in sin in this world, if it were not that it is so offensive to God, that he will punish them forever hereafter to show his resentment, is one of the most pernicious deceptions that ever darkened the understanding of mankind. This deception is the means of continuing people in the love of sin. They long to live in it, and would without restraint, were it not for this system of fear. But it has been fully proved that this terror is no real security to a virtuous life. Those who are the strongest advocates for this doctrine of tormenting men in another world, because they have been sinners here, are, in general, as wicked men as any other class. It

is true they endeavor to be more secret in the practice of vice, but this only adds the wickedness of hypocrisy to the rest of their sins. These remarks are by no means directed against any particular denomination, they are designed for general application. The fact is, if men are really virtuous, they are so from the love they have for the moral principles of our common nature; and we are happy to find some of this description among all denominations and in every class of citizens.

It would be most glaringly absurd for one to tell a sick man languishing with distressing pain, that there is no penal law by which any punishment can be inflicted on him for being sick, he had better not send for a physician, nor give himself any trouble about recovering his health. A patient who should be treated with such communication would surely think himself trifled with. If one who knew the situation of the woman, who pressed through the crowd to reach the garment of Jesus, had told her, that no punishment would be inflicted on her if she did not go to him, and therefore she might indulge in the pleasures of her disorder, would she have supposed the person serious? But this would have been no more absurd than it is to tell sinners, that if there had been no everlasting damnation in the eternal world for their sins in this, they may indulge in all the pleasures of sin. As sin is a disorder it certainly deprives of happiness, and plunges the sinner into misery; and if there be any propriety in urging those who are sick to apply to a physician, there certainly is the same propriety in urging sinners to come to Christ, that is, to come to his doctrine, to his truth, to his spirit. And the language of the Redeemer's invitation is most reasonable; "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The motives which influenced the multitude, who thronged Jesus as he went to the house of Jairus, were no doubt various. Some probably, saw Jesus now for the first time, and were highly incited with the hope of *seeing a miracle* wrought. Perhaps others were his

bitter enemies, and were on the look out to discover some fraud or deception in the man. Some went in the crowd because others were going, and they went for the sake of the company. Some no doubt went from the laudable motive of giving their countenance and support to the divine teacher in whom they most sincerely believed. Some very likely were there who had experienced the healing power of the Redeemer, and were rejoiced to have an opportunity of seeing a miracle of mercy again performed. But among the whole there was one distressed woman whose mind was far from speculative contemplations. She was impelled to press through the crowd that she might be healed of her own infirmity.

As it was with the multitude, who, on various occasions thronged our Saviour in the days of his ministry on earth, when some for one motive and some for another joined those vast assemblies, so, no doubt, it is with those who now assemble where the healing doctrine of Jesus is preached. Some from curiosity, some from habit, some from fashion, some to keep the company of others, some we hope go because they love the words of everlasting life, and now and then one, perhaps, who feeling the infirmity of their own sinful heart, go with a determination to press through every obstacle and come to Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life; who is the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.

While delivering this course of lectures your servant has often thought of the possible motives which occasioned such uncommon assemblies to crowd every part of this house, and a hope has been entertained that among the many, a few at least, were striving to find him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write. A fervent desire has been exercised that the doctrine of our blessed Redeemer might be held up to the view of the hearers, that they might reach forth the hand of faith and lay hold on the hope which is set before them.

Being taught by the Saviour, we did not indulge in an expectation that the word of truth would be receiv-

ed and kept by all who heard it. Jesus represented the success of his own preaching by the instructive parable of the sower, who went forth to sow; "and as he sowed some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth, and when the sun was up they were scorched; and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold." If such has been the success of those feeble efforts made to propagate the gospel of the kingdom in this place, surely we have reason to be thankful to the Lord of the vineyard. If while the enemies of the word have, like the birds in the parable, taken away that which was sown in the heart, if while the spirit of persecution agitating the tongue of censure has caused many to shrink from a steady perseverance in what they gladly received, if while the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things have, like thorns, sprang up and choked the word in some, others have received it in good and honest hearts, have retained the precious grain, and brought forth fruit to the honor of God, our labors have not been in vain, our exertions are amply rewarded.

This last, of the course of lectures proposed for publication, in its conclusion, will call on all who hear, to form the resolution which enabled the woman to press through the crowd and come to Jesus, and come to him likewise. That is, that you strive to the utmost of your well directed abilities and means to come to the knowledge of the Saviour's doctrine.

Is it not the case with many, as it was with the woman, have you not spent much and suffered many things of those "physicians of no value," who have endeavored to heal you with the doctrines and commandments of men? and do you not find that after all you are none the better? Have you found peace

in believing that our heavenly Father has elected some to everlasting life, and reprobated the rest to endless wo? Have you found that all your plague is healed by fancying that you are elected unto life eternal, while your companions and children may be devoted to everlasting sorrow? Can such medicine as this make you perfectly whole. No, but in the bitterness of your souls, when you look on your little ones, and believe that they are exposed to endless ruin, you cry out as Abraham did, "O that Ishmael might live before the Lord." Come then, my friends, to the peaceful doctrine of Jesus, who took little children in his arms and blessed them, and said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." O the peace there is in believing this testimony? It overcomes the plague of unbelief, and fills the heart with joy.

Can you find any real relief from the power of a carnal heart, by believing that your immortal state depends on your own good works in this imperfect state? Do you feel whole from all your plagues by believing in this prevailing doctrine which rest the weight of eternity on the imperfect works of mortality and time? This doctrine of human contrivance, always associates the "heart-chilling" doctrine of endless misery for those who come short of their duty, with every pleasing prospect of a world of joy for those who by their good works win the immortal prize. This doctrine as well as that of election and reprobation makes an eternal separation between those of the most endearing connexions on earth. Why is there so much mourning, so much gloominess on the countenances of those who hope to gain immortal glory by their works? Is it because they have pressed through the superstitions of the church and caught hold of the garment of the Saviour? No, this is not the case. They have endeavored to mend their own garments, and they find the rent is continually growing worse. Let such come to the Saviour's doctrine, and believe that the gift of God is eternal life, and they shall find peace in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Nothing short of that which God has implanted in

the soul can satisfy the mind. The apostle says; the word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth, the word of faith which we preach. This word of faith is the gift of God, which is eternal life in Jesus; and nothing short of this can satisfy the mind. While we oppose this principle we oppose our own happiness; and while we shut one individual of the human family away from this word of life, we bring death to our own souls in so doing.

Some are so embarrassed with one doctrine and some with another, that they are prevented from coming to the doctrine of Jesus. Many, very many, are striving to feed on the husks that the unclean eat, and neglect to come to Christ. The vanities of youth, the pride and fashions of the age keep thousands back from coming to the purifying religion of Jesus; and yet his willing, his gracious arms are extended, as in the last day, that great day of the feast, when he stood and cried, "If any man thirst let him come to me and drink."

To conclude—My christian friends, I feel it my duty as well as a pleasure, when I reflect on the more than ordinary attention which you have paid to these lectures, and the liberal patronage with which you have favored their publication, to tender you my most grateful acknowledgments. And while I am constrained deeply to regret that my labors should come so short of the great subjects on which I have treated, I humbly prostrate my soul before God, and implore his forgiveness in every particular wherein I have erred through ignorance or infirmity; and earnestly entreat that these feeble efforts may be attended with the blessing of him who fed thousands of men, women and children with so small a portion. And to his name alone be all the glory.—AMEN.

UNIVERSALIST BOOKS.

O. HUTCHINSON, No. 41 Genesee-street, Utica, publishes and keeps for sale the following valuable books, viz :—

Murray's Life,	50
Ballou's Notes on the Parables,	63
Ballou's Treatise on Atonement,	50
Ballou's Lecture Sermons,	75
Ballou's Select Sermons,	75
Austin's Voice to Youth, different binding, from	75 to 1.50
Causes of Infidelity Removed, by Rev. S. R. Smith,	63
Christian Visitant, three vols in one	88
" " single volumes,	31
Hymns of Zion,	75
Pro and Con of Universalism, by Rev. G Rogers.	1.25

PAMPHLETS.

Kingdom Shut, two discourses, by Revs. A. B. Grosh and T. D. Cook,	13
An Inquiry into the Scriptures, by Rev. A. B. Grosh,	13
Universalism what it is not and what it is, by Rev. E. H. Chapin,	6

ALSO FOR SALE THE FOLLOWING NEW AND STANDARD WORKS.

Skinner and Cambell's Discussion,	1.00
Ely and Thomas' "	63
Universalist Guide, by Rev. T. Whittemore,	1.00
Lectures to Young Men, by Rev. E. H. Chapin,	50
Expositor and Defence of Universalism, Rev. I. D. Williamson,	50
Layman's Legacy, 2 volumes, Rev. Henry Fitz,	2.25
Practical Hints, Rev. J. G. Adams,	
Happy Death Scenes, do	
Universalism Illustrated and Defended, by Rev. O. A. Skinner,	1.00
Rose of Sharon, Edited by Miss S. C. Edgarton	2.00
Skinner's Letters to Aikin and Lansing,	50
Streeter's Hymns, differet bindings, from	44 to 1.25
Ballou's do do do do	63 to 2.25

Also a general assortment of Theological, Phrenological, School and Miscellaneous books and Stationery.

☞ Particular attention paid to furnishing school, Sunday school and society Libraries.

Acme
Bookbinding Co., Inc.
100 Cambridge St.
Charlestown, MA 02129

BX9943.B3S4 1840
A series of lecture sermons :
Andover-Harvard 000000003
3 2044 077 891 596

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

BALLOU, Hosea

AUTHOR
A series of lecture

TITLE
sermons.

Call Number

BX
9943
.B3
S4
1840